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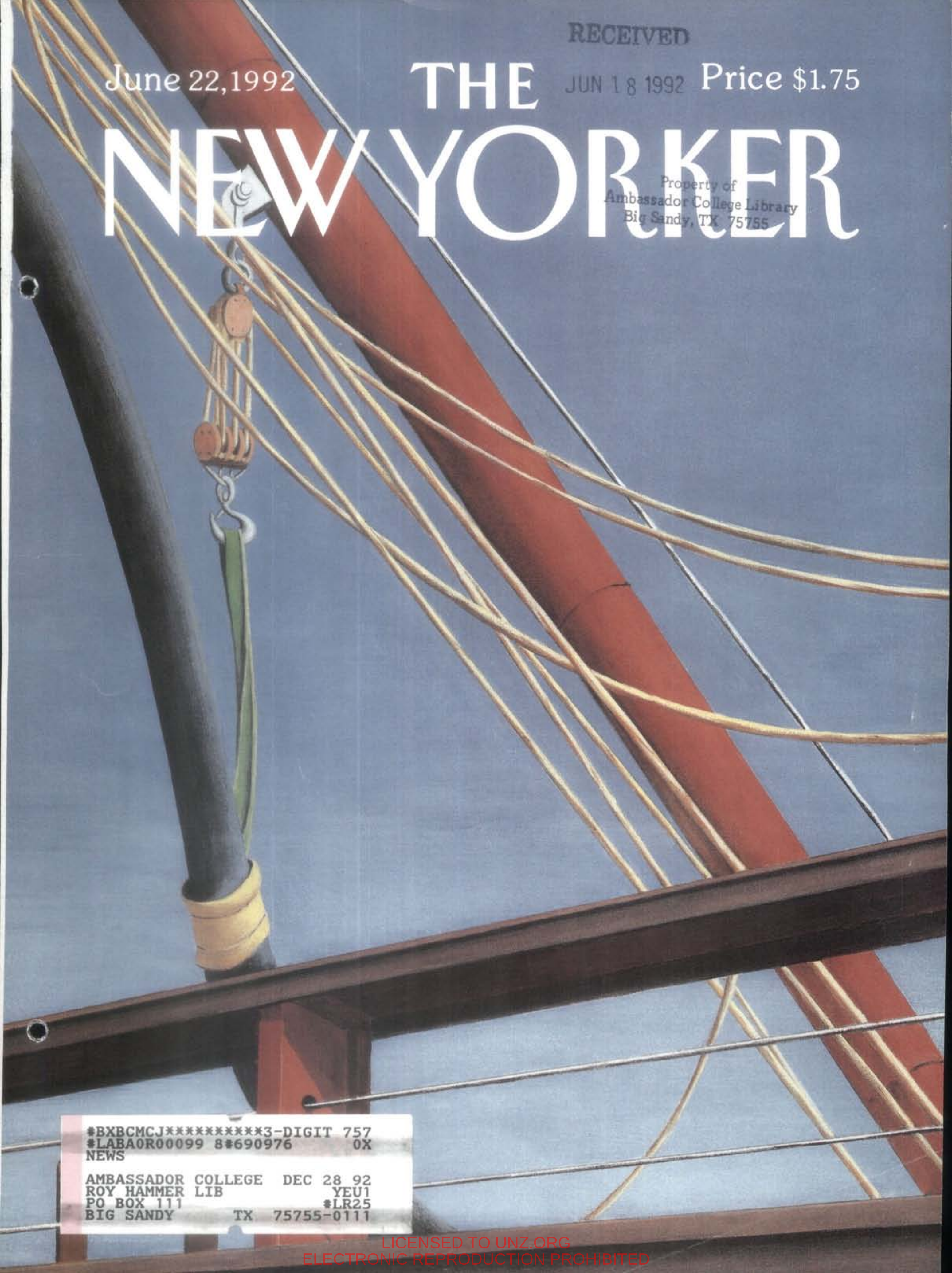

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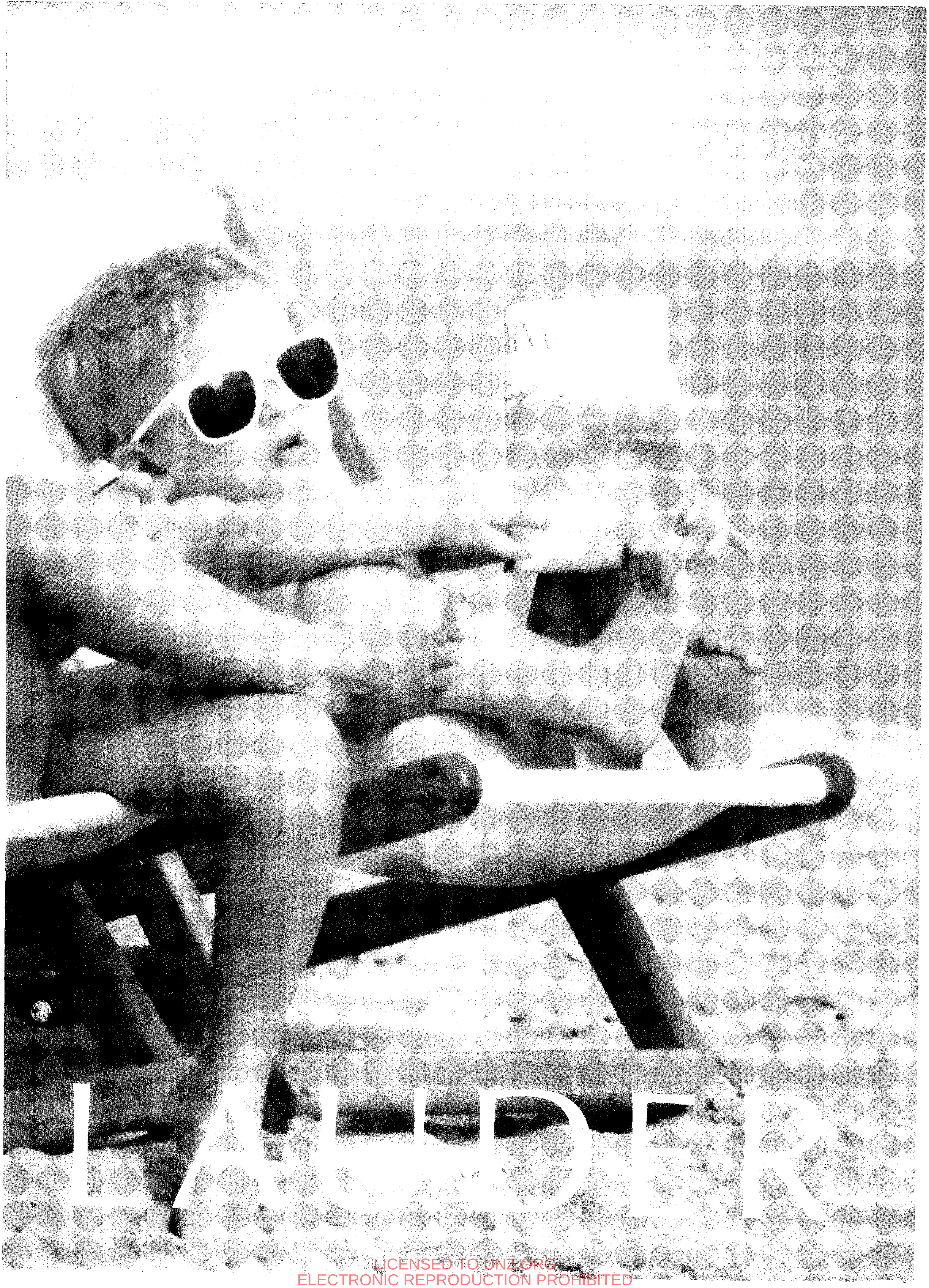
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# GOINGS ON ABOUT TOWN

## THE THEATRE

WHEN Mitch McGuire, Faith Catlin, and Steve Kaplan founded their theatre group, in 1979, they had established an objective (doing comedy) and had waded through innumerable suggestions for names (Manhattan Punch Line was the winner, though New York Ha-Ha Theatre came close). They had even managed to raise some money. "We had twenty thousand dollars," says Mr. Kaplan, the artistic director, "which was enough, we thought, to get us through a couple of months." Thirteen years later—years in which the group has staged hit revivals, furthered the careers of dozens of playwrights, encouraged young actors, and produced an annual one-act festival, the eighth version of which runs at the Judith Anderson through June 21—the Punch Line is closing up shop. The reasons are all too familiar: the recession's effect on individual and corporate benefactors; a sixty-five-per-cent reduction in the group's state funding over the past three years; the high cost of renting space. Even during the eighties, company coffers never brimmed, but there was always hope that things might improve. Asked to name the moment when that hope vanished, Mr. Kaplan mentions a day in March, 1991. "We had just finished our one-act festival and were feeling very high about having pulled it off again. Then these guys arrived at our offices with a dolly, to repossess the Xerox machine."

Mr. Kaplan understands perfectly well how hard it is to raise money when other nonprofits seem to have even more urgent needs. "Frankly, *I* would have had a hard time giving to us lately. I'd give to groups that help AIDS patients or the homeless." Hand in hand with his misgivings about this situation, Mr. Kaplan says he has experienced a kind of Kübler-Rossian process with regard to the Punch Line. But he's now reached the final stage—acceptance. Soon he'll be moving to Los Angeles, where there will be plenty of Punch Line alumni around, many of whom have built successful careers in show business. Knowing that he and his colleagues gave these people their first break is a consolation, as is the awareness that the Punch Line had a hand in making comedy more respectable on the New York stage. "When we started out, Off Off Broadway had a lot of plays where characters named He and She would sit around in black turtlenecks, talking wearily. There aren't many Hes and Shes left today."

### OPENINGS AND PREVIEWS

(Please call the phone number listed with the theatre for schedule and ticket information.)

**Balancing Act**—A new musical comedy by Dan Goggin. Opens June 15 at 7. (Westside, 407 W. 43rd St. 307-4100.)

**Flaubert's Latest**—A comedy by Peter Parnell. Previews through June 21 at 3. Opens June 21 at 7. (Playwrights Horizons, 416 W. 42nd St. 279-4200.)

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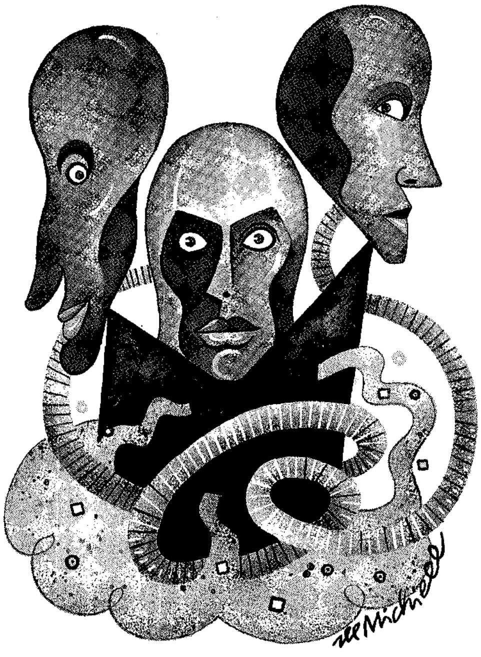

*Blue Man Group in "Tubes"*

**The Innocents' Crusade**—A play by Keith Reddin. Previews through June 21. Opens June 23 at 7:30. (Manhattan Theatre Club, at City Center, 131 W. 55th St. 581-7907.)

**The Night Larry Kramer Kissed Me**—A play by the actor David Drake. Previews June 16-21. Opens June 22 at 7. (Perry Street Theatre, 31 Perry St. 564-8038.)

**Salomé** and **Chinese Coffee**—Al Pacino stars in two shows that will run in repertory. The first is a production of the Oscar Wilde work, and the second is a contemporary play by Ira Lewis. Both are in previews. (Circle in the Square, 50th St. west of Broadway. 239-6200.)

**Weird Romance**—Ellen Greene and Jonathan Hadary lead the cast of a science-fiction musical by Alan Brennert (book), Alan Menken (score), and David Spencer (lyrics). Previews through June 21 at 3. Opens June 21 at 7:30. (WPA Theatre, 519 W. 23rd St. 206-0523.)

### OPENED RECENTLY

**Anna, the Gypsy Swede**—Viveca Lindfors wrote and stars in this one-woman play. (Theatre for the New City, 155 First Ave., at 10th St. 254-1109. Closes June 28.)

**Beau Jest**—A comedy by James Sherman. (Lamb's, 130 W. 44th St. 997-1780.)

**The Best of Forbidden Broadway**—This tenth-anniversary edition of Gerard Alessandrini's long-running, ever-fluctuating musical revue is, as one might expect, a treat. It features three old favorites (Michael McGrath, Toni DiBuono, and Roxie Lucas) and a Mr. Patrick Quinn, who is new to us and constitutes a real find. There is some new material, but our favorite sequences are still the spoof of "M. Butterfly" and the "Speed-the-Plow" number, "Madonna's Brain," in which David Mamet and Ron Silver try to teach Madonna to act and she ends up tearing off most of her clothes. (Reviewed in our issue of 5/4/92.) (Theatre East, 211 E. 60th St. 838-9090.)

**Catskills on Broadway**—A festival of ethnicity and all but unbroken laughter. Freddie Roman and Mal Z. Lawrence are the Jewish comedians; Dick Capri handles the Italians. The jokes explode around us, and there isn't a dud in the lot. Marilyn Michaels, the fourth member of the company, does imitations of imitations. (12/23/91) (Lunt-Fontanne, 205 W. 46th St. 307-4100.)

**Conversations with My Father**—If you're looking for a totally satisfying theatrical experience, try the new Herb Gardner, a bittersweet memory play about a Lower East Side barkeep, his two sons, and the patrons of his tavern. As staged by Daniel Sullivan, with an ace cast led by the wonderful Judd Hirsch, the play does what "Jake's Women" and "Dancing at Lughnasa" would probably do if their authors were, respectively, more sophisticated and less sentimental. Grab this one. (4/13/92) (Royale, 242 W. 45th St. 239-6200.)

**Crazy for You**—Loosely based on "Girl Crazy," which opened in 1930, this glorious show is actually a celebration of the music of George Gershwin and the lyrics of his brother Ira—nineteen songs in all—and also of the witty, imaginative choreography of Susan Stroman. Ken Ludwig wrote the lively book. Harry Groener and Jodi Benson are the lead actor/dancers. The scenery is by Robin Wagner; the costumes are by William Ivey Long; and the masterly direction is by Mike Ockrent. Bless 'em all. (3/2/92) (Shubert, 225 W. 44th St. 239-6200.)

**Dancing at Lughnasa**—How you respond to Brian Friel's wistful autobiographical play depends a good deal on your personality and preoccupations. Either you will find it lovely and lyrical or it will strike you as the memory play from Hell. (11/4/91) (Plymouth, 236 W. 45th St. 239-6200.)

**Death and the Maiden**—Mike Nichols' Americanized version of Ariel Dorfman's play (in which Juliet Stevenson took London by storm last year) is a sad disappointment. The play, which is set in "a country that is probably Chile" and concerns a woman's attempt to punish the man she holds responsible for torturing her in captivity fifteen years before, is anything but subtle, and Glenn Close, Richard Dreyfuss, and Gene Hackman are all grossly miscast. (3/30/92) (Brooks Atkinson, 256 W. 47th St. 307-4100.)

**The Extra Man**—Richard Greenberg's new play, about a blocked writer who tricks a married friend into an adulterous affair so that he will have something to write a novel about, is arch, smug, and inept, and—despite a first-rate cast that consists of Adam Arkin, Boyd Gaines, Laila Robins, and John Slattery—does nothing to offset one's impression that this playwright's experience of life is confined to parties, chic restaurants, and the New York literary scene. (6/1/92) (Manhattan Theatre Club, at City Center, 131 W. 55th St. 581-7907. Closes June 21.)

**Falsettos**—This back-to-back revival of "March of the Falsettos" and "Falsettoland," two of William Finn's three one-act musicals about a childish, self-absorbed man who leaves his wife and son for his not very nice male lover, is strictly for those who care. We've never understood the appeal of William Finn's "Marvin" trilogy. It has a chronology as complicated as the Oedipus cycle and a dramatic sensibility akin to that of the Oresteia. To us, though, it has always seemed like banality set to music: shallow, unlikable people expressing themselves in shallow, unlikable songs. (5/11/92) (Golden, 252 W. 45th St. 239-6200.)

**Fires in the Mirror: Crown Heights, Brooklyn and Other Identities**—Anna Deavere Smith is a wily mimic and verbal caricaturist, with a sharp, discerning ear and a tongue to match. The program, which she wrote as well as performs, takes as its point of departure the aftermath of the accident last summer in Crown Heights, Brooklyn (in which a car carrying members of a Hasidic sect went out of control and killed a black child, Gavin Cato). Miss Smith impersonates more than twenty-five people who were either directly or indirectly concerned. Her net is far-flung and, not surprisingly, she is often strongest when funniest. Those here gathered include Angela Davis, in California; Professor Leonard Jeffries, of City College; and the omnipresent Reverend Al Sharpton. There are also a couple of rabbis; a couple of rapping street kids; a local Jewish housewife; and, most notably, Norman Rosenbaum, an Australian whose brother Yankel was stabbed to death in retribution on the night of the accident. All the material in the show was based on actual interviews. (Public, 425 Lafayette St. 598-7150.)

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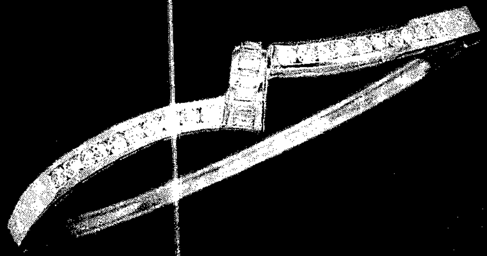

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## THE THEATRE–Cont'd

**Five Guys Named Moe**—The guys are black dancers and singers of ability and spirit, who perform the songs (either lyrics or music or both) of the late Louis Jordan, among them "Don't Let the Sun Catch You Crying," "Ain't Nobody Here but Us Chickens," and "Is You Is or Is You Ain't My Baby?" This London import makes a merry evening. (4/20/92) (Eugene O'Neill, 230 W. 49th St. 239-6200.)

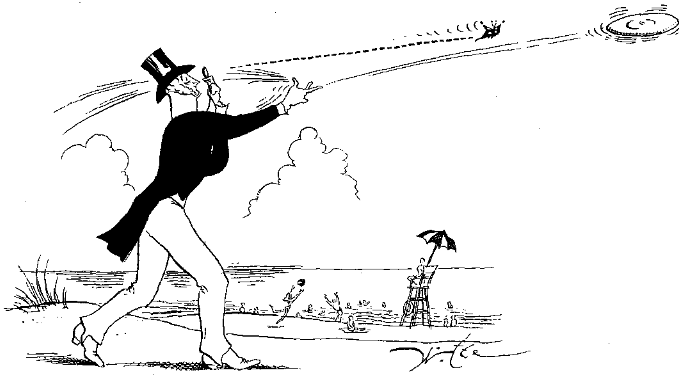
**Guys and Dolls**—A lively production of Frank Loesser's perfect musical, under the direction of Jerry Zaks. Nathan Lane and Faith Prince are the leading guy and doll, and Tony Walton designed the stunning scenery. (4/27/92) (Martin Beck, 302 W. 45th St. 239-6200.)

**Hauptmann**—John Logan's self-congratulatory play about the accused kidnapper of the Lindbergh baby, recently seen at the Victory Gardens Theatre, in Chicago, might be worth seeing for Denis O'Hare's performance in the title role, but it has a rather nasty aftertaste. The play arrives with great fanfare and a certain air of self-satisfaction, and tells us a number of things we already know—that capital punishment is horrible and that, guilty or not, Bruno Richard Hauptmann probably got a raw deal. (Cherry Lane, 38 Commerce St. 989-2020.)

**Innocent Eréndira and Her Heartless Grandmother**—An adaptation of a novella by Gabriel García Márquez; directed by Jorge Alí Triana. Performed in Spanish; simultaneous-English-translation sets are available. (Repertorio Español, Gramercy Arts Theatre, 138 E. 27th St. 889-2850.)

**Jake's Women**—Alan Alda is at his genial best in the new Neil Simon. The play, about an aging writer trying to come to terms with the women in his life, past and present, is pretty much what you'd expect: some funny lines and a lot of phony dialogue. It's predictable, banal, and contrived, but at least it showcases a fine cast of actresses that includes Kate Burton and Joyce Van Patten. (4/6/92) (Neil Simon, 250 W. 52nd St. 307-4100.)

**Jelly's Last Jam**—The music of Jelly Roll Morton, self-proclaimed inventor of jazz, and, at the same time, an unsparing delineation of Morton himself. The show, an original if ever there was one, was written and directed by George C. Wolfe. In the starring role, Gregory Hines combines his astonishing talents as tap dancer and actor; Savion Glover, who plays the character as a young man, is worthy of him, which is saying a lot. Also present are Keith David, Tonya Pinkins, Wayne Mathis, and Mary Bond Davis. Luther Henderson has adapted Morton's music and offered some music of his own; the lyrics were written by Susan Birkenhead; and Hope Clark was the choreographer. (5/11/92) (Virginia, 245 W. 52nd St. 239-6200.)



**Lotto (Experience the Dream)**—A comedy by Cliff Roquemore, which has recently moved downtown from the Heckscher Theatre. Performances resume June 19. (Union Square Theatre, 100 E. 17th St. 505-9021.)

**Manhattan Punch Line**—Presenting the eighth annual festival of one-act comedies, which will be the company's last New York production. Evening A: Plays by Michael Panes, Michael Aschner, Stephen Gregg, Theresa Rebeck, and John Holleman. . . . ¶ Evening B: Works by David Bottrell, Mr. Panes, Larry Blamire, Barbara Lindsay, and Michael Dempsey. (Judith Anderson, 422 W. 42nd St. For reservations, call 239-0827. Closes June 21.)

**Man of La Mancha**—The granddaddy of all junk musicals. This road-show revival, starring Sheena Easton and Raul Julia, is in every respect adequate to the occasion. Miss Easton is not the most expressive actress in the world, but then Mr. Julia is not the most accomplished singer. Tony Martinez, who plays Sancho, recently celebrated his two-thousandth performance in the role—and it shows. Joan Diener substitutes for Miss Easton on Tuesday evenings and Wednesday matinées. (5/11/92) (Marquis, Broadway at 45th St. 307-4100.)

**Marvin's Room**—A play about dying, suffering, and sacrifice in one family, written in a style so frisky as to set the teeth permanently on edge. There is a fine performance by Mark Rosenthal as a smoldering adolescent. Also with Alice Drummond, Laura Esterman, and Tim Monsion. Scott McPherson is the dramatist. (Minetta Lane Theatre, 18 Minetta Lane, east of Sixth Ave., between W. 3rd and Bleecker Sts. 420-8000.)

**The Most Happy Fella**—This is one musical we think the world could be without and feel no sorrow. The story of a girl forced to content herself with some old duffer because some other old duffer wanted to teach everyone a lesson about making do with what life has to offer, it's pseudo opera superimposed on pseudo Americana. As for Gerald Gutierrez's Goodspeed Opera production, it's your basic slightly-better-than-average dinner-theatre revival. What's the rumpus? (2/24/92) (Booth, 222 W. 45th St. 239-6200.)

**The Price**—Hector Elizondo, Debra Mooney, Joe Spano, and Eli Wallach in the Roundabout's revival of the Arthur Miller play. John Tillinger was the director. (Reviewed in this issue.) (Criterion Center, Broadway at 45th St. 869-8400.)

**Punch Me in the Stomach**—A one-woman show starring Deb Filler. Written by Ms. Filler and Alison Summers, who directed. Presented by New York Theatre Workshop. (Theatre Off Park, 224 Waverly Pl., at 11th St. 302-6989. Closes June 27.)

**The Rake** and **The Lover**—One-act plays by, respectively, Raymond Luczak and Harold Pinter. June 19-20 at 8. (Lower Levels of Society, 614 E. 9th St. 260-6207.)

**Red Diaper Baby**—Josh Kornbluth's one-man show, recently seen at Second Stage. (Actors Playhouse, 100 Seventh Ave. S. 691-6226.)

**Richard III**—A Royal National Theatre production of Shakespeare's play, starring Ian McKellen. (Reviewed in this issue.) (Brooklyn Academy of Music, 30 Lafayette Ave. 1-718 636-4100. Closes June 21.)

**Ruthless!**—This camp musical about a monster child star is harmless and amusing enough—assuming you can stomach the little girl. She gave us the pip. (Players, 115 Macdougal St. 254-5076.)

**Sight Unseen**—Donald Margulies' engrossing new play, which is about an Eric Fischl-type painter who decides to look up an old girlfriend he once treated badly, takes the contemporary art scene to task. Technically, it also plays around with time a good deal, though never sloppily or gratuitously. You end up being affected by a curious kind of resonance—it's earned, not something you've brought with you into the theatre. (2/3/92) (Orpheum, 126 Second Ave., at 8th St. 477-2477.)

**Spike Heels**—"Private Lives" à la mode. The combatants are a sexy, volatile young woman (Saundra Santiago) and three Back Bay types—a writer (Tony Goldwyn), a lawyer (Kevin Bacon), and a fiancée in sensible shoes (Julie White). The setting is Boston, the ending is happy, and laughter abounds. Theresa Rebeck wrote the play, and Michael Greif directed it. (Reviewed in this issue.) (Second Stage, Broadway at 76th St. 873-6103. Closes July 3.)

**A Streetcar Named Desire**—Gregory Mosher's revival, with Jessica Lange in the role of Blanche DuBois, plays like a parody. It features a cuddly, avuncular Stanley (Alec Baldwin), a Stella (Amy Madigan) straight out of a Carol Burnett skit, and a lot of embarrassing staging. Miss Lange's acting is all "for the camera." One feels that she is trying to rescue the role of Blanche from decades' worth of assumptions about it but hasn't had much help or guidance from her director. (4/27/92) (Ethel Barrymore, 243 W. 47th St. 239-6200.)

**The Substance of Fire**—Jon Robin Baitz's play about an intransigent publisher at odds with his grown children, having moved from Playwrights Horizons, seems stronger than ever in this more formal theatre. The remarkable Ron Rifkin continues in the leading role, and he is ably supported by the members of the company—Patrick Breen, John Benjamin Hickey, Cordelia Richards, and Maria Tucci. (3/9/92) (Mitzi E. Newhouse, Lincoln Center. 239-6200.)

**Tubes**—A performance work by Blue Man Group about art and other matters. (Astor Place Theatre, 434 Lafayette St. 254-4370.)

**Two Trains Running**—August Wilson's latest, set in a Pittsburgh luncheonette in 1969, is one of those plays in which all the performances seem to be groping hotly after award nominations and everything is freighted with Meaning. (4/27/92) (Walter Kerr, 219 W. 48th St. 239-6200.)

### LONG RUNS

**cats:** Some twenty poems about cats by T. S. Eliot, set to music by Andrew Lloyd Webber. A mighty spectacle about mighty little, owing its effectiveness to Trevor Nunn's direction and to John Napier's sets and costumes. (Winter Garden, Broadway at 50th St. 239-6200.). . . **the fantasticks:** The longest-running long run recently celebrated its thirty-second birthday. (Sullivan Street Playhouse, 181 Sullivan St., at Bleecker St. 674-3838.). . . **forever plaid:** Stuart Ross's loving tongue-in-cheek salute to the "guy groups" of the fifties is a real treat. Bring your mom. Hell, bring the whole family. (Steve McGraw's, 158 W. 72nd St. 595-7400.). . . **lips together, teeth apart:** Two couples share a beach house on Fire Island over the Fourth of July weekend, in Terrence McNally's very funny play about a number of serious matters. (Lucille Lortel, 121 Christopher St. 239-6200.). . . **lost in yonkers:** This family melodrama by Neil Simon, set in Yonkers during the Second World War, is about what happens when a cowering, pathetic man has to leave his two adolescent sons with his intimidating mother for the better part of a year. (Richard Rodgers, 226 W. 46th St. 221-1211.). . . **les misérables:** The stars of this musical adaptation of the Victor Hugo novel are John Napier's settings and David Hersey's lighting. (Imperial, 249 W. 45th St. 239-6200.). . . **miss saigon:** Oh, the horror! The horror! (Broadway Theatre, Broadway at 53rd St. 239-6200.). . . **nunsense:** A musical comedy by Dan Goggin. (Douglas Fairbanks, 432 W. 42nd St. 239-4321.). . . **perfect crime:** A murder mystery by Warren Manzi. (Theatre Four, 424 W. 55th St. 695-3401.). . . **the phantom of the opera:** This much ballyhooed Andrew Lloyd Webber musical is fun—if you're not bothered by theatre that cares not a whit for words and contains not one ghost of an idea. Except for the sets, everything about the show is negligible. (Majestic, 245 W. 44th St. 239-6200.). . . **the secret garden:** This lovely musical adaptation of the classic children's story by Frances Hodgson Burnett isn't just a kiddie show. Subtle, charming, intelligent, and wholly literary in its approach to adaptation, it manages both to be faithful to the spirit of the book and to comment on the particular moment in time that produced it. (St. James, 246 W. 44th St. 239-6200.). . . **song of singapore:** A musical with a promising concept: turn a Polish veterans' hall into a Singapore night club, circa 1941, and spill murder and mayhem onto the premises. Unfortunately, the lavish settings (by John Lee Beatty) and the mammoth orchestra cannot conceal a very thin story and a host of excruciatingly bad jokes. (17 Irving Pl., at 15th St. 228-0844.). . . **tony n' tina's wedding:** The never-ending nuptials of Anthony Angelo Nunzio and Valentina Lynne Vitale. With audience participation, as you probably know. (St. John's Church, 81 Christopher St. 279-4200.). . . **the will rogers follies:** The sets by Tony Walton, the direction and choreography by Tommy Tune, the costumes by Willa Kim, and the row upon row of Ziegfeld girls make a feast for the eyes, but the funny bone and heart are neglected. With Mac Davis. (Palace, Broadway at 47th St. 730-8200.)

# DANCE

Balanchine liked to say that his "Allegro Brillante" compressed into thirteen minutes everything he knew about ballet. Suki Schorer often danced in this work under Balanchine's direction. This year, she set it on her School of American Ballet students for the school's recent Workshop program, and it brought down the house. After attending a rehearsal conducted by Miss Schorer, with a talk by pianist Nancy McDill, we were impressed with a few specific examples of choreographic mastery that "Allegro Brillante" represents:

- The title of the ballet refers to the tempo marking for its music—Tchaikovsky's one-movement Piano Concerto No. 3 in E-Flat Major. For this work, "allegro brillante" means irresistibly danceable—and right from the start, as soon as the curtain lifts, revealing the dancers already in motion.
- The speed notwithstanding, the dancer's job here is to make all the poses crystal clear before moving on, and then to make the transitional steps big.
- The music is in standard sonata form, with three main sections and a coda; the first theme is built on an opening motif of just two notes. That binary idea permeates the choreography. "Allegro Brillante" is a ballet for five couples; the ballerina is asked to perform strings of double pirouettes; many of the step combinations open or resolve in a trochaic metre.
- When a woman moves between two male partners, it is important that her body maintain a visual orientation to both of them. For example, as she runs up to one man to place her hand on his arm for support in an arabesque pose, the toes of her lifted foot should point back toward the man she has just left and to whom she will return. Out of this practical bit of staging arise waves of impractical longing.
- Ballet can accommodate all sorts of jazzy maneuvers—like the jump-and-slide combination that Balanchine slipped into "Allegro Brillante"—if you give them to the principal dancers early, as links between classical steps. (On the ballet's original piano score, this combination is noted as "the Fred Astaire step.")

" 'Allegro Brillante,' " Miss Schorer said. "Brilliant, shining, sparkly, happy—lightness."

**New York City Ballet**—June 16 at 8: "Delight the Muses," "Sonatas and Interludes," "Three Preludes" (New York première; with guest artist Mikhail Baryshnikov), "Two's Company," and "Slaughter on Tenth Avenue."... ¶ June 17 at 8: "Images," "Concertino," "Prodigal Son," and "Tchaikovsky Piano Concerto No. 2."... ¶ June 18 at 8: "Episodes," "Images," "Duo Concertant" (with Mr. Baryshnikov), and "Tchaikovsky Suite No. 3."... ¶ June 19 at 8: "Monumentum Pro Gesualdo/Movements for Piano and Orchestra," "Duo Concertant" (with Mr. Baryshnikov), "Barber Violin Concerto," and "The Four Seasons."... ¶ June 20 at 2: "Barber Violin Concerto," "Valse Triste," "Bet Ann's Dance," and "Tchaikovsky Piano Concerto No. 2."... ¶ June 20 at 8: "Monumentum Pro Gesualdo/Movements for Piano and Orchestra," "Herman Schmerman," "Barber Violin Concerto," and "Tchaikovsky Suite No. 3."... ¶ June 21 at 1: "Ancient Airs & Dances," "Episodes," and "In G Major."... ¶ June 21 at 7: "Delight of the Muses," "Bugaku," and "The Four Seasons."... ¶ June 23 at 8: "Mercury," "Tarantella," "Opus 19/The Dreamer," and "The Four Seasons."... ¶ June 24 at 8: "Monumentum Pro Gesualdo/Movements for Piano and Orchestra," "Three Preludes" (with Mr. Baryshnikov), "Afternoon of a Faun," "Antique Epigraphs," and "Tchaikovsky Suite No. 3." (New York State Theatre. 870-5570.)

**American Ballet Theatre**—Final performances of the season. June 15-16 at 8 and June 17 at 2 and 8: "Bruch Violin Concerto No. 1," "Moondance" (New York première), and "The Rite of Spring."... ¶ June 18 at 8: "Peter and the Wolf," "Fall River Legend," and "Sinfonietta."... ¶ June 19 at 8: "Peter and the Wolf," "Moondance," and "Sinfonietta."... ¶ June 20 at 2 and 8: "Peter and the Wolf," "Fall River Legend," and "Sinfonietta." (Metropolitan Opera House. 362-6000.)

**Kirov Ballet**—A two-week engagement opens with performances of "Swan Lake." (Metropolitan Opera House. 362-6000. June 22 at 7, June 23 at 8, and June 24 at 2 and 8.)

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## FOUNDATIONS

*Did you know that the good old union suit—the one-piece undergarment of choice in the "F-Troop" series—was rendered obsolete in America, in the nineteen-twenties, by the advent of central heating? This is only one of the curious facts you pick up at the "Jockey Underwear Retrospective," at the Fashion Institute of Technology (227 West 27th Street; through August 1). The show traces the development of the company's clothing, from its founding in 1876, as S. T. Cooper & Sons, by a retired Methodist Episcopal minister, to its present status as Jockey International. The mood of the exhibit is slightly nostalgic, but its theme is, unmistakably, progress. Studying the text on one wall, you learn that Cooper & Sons was the first company to equip its union suits with rubber buttons instead of the old pearl ones, which tended to crack when they were put through the wringer. On another wall, an advertisement from 1910 warns that many of the "striking improvements" pioneered by the company had been "imitated by a score of parasitic manufacturers."*

*The exhibit eagerly points out "milestones" in Jockey's history of self-promotion. The company was the first underwear maker to advertise in a national magazine, the first to advertise underwear on TV (in 1956, on NBC's "Home Show," with Hugh Downs and Arlene Francis), and the first to use "real people" in advertising. The marketing ideas on display range from ads based on early-twentieth-century oil paintings to Jim Palmer's hairy-chested testimonials. But the most memorable ads are probably those from the 1936 "Squirmer" campaign, in which people are shown writhing in discomfort and cursing their inferior underwear. One ad proclaims, "Squirmers just aren't popular!" and another, "A squirmer's only friend is his dog."*

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# NIGHT LIFE

Every year at about this time, the night-life scene goes a little berserk. The catalyst is the industry meet-and-greet known as the New Music Seminar. By day, this gathering is a mercantile round of workshops, conferences, and promotional activities. Come sundown, though, the participants are ready to rock. The evening portion of the seminar is called New Music Nights, and from June 16 through June 21 the city's streets will be clogged with revellers roaming from club to club to sample from among some four hundred bands. In the past, we've found that there are two strategies for tackling this behemoth. You can try to hit the shows causing the biggest stir, and fight the crowds, or you can wander aimlessly and see what you stumble upon.

This year's lineup is quite diverse, reflecting the pop world's multiple personalities. Hip-hop is clearly in ascendance, and events devoted to that style will probably be major draws, such as one at Wetlands on Saturday, which includes the Disposable Heroes of Hiphoprisy, Basehead, and Me Phi Me. International music is also making a strong showing: the many "theme" bills include "Psycho Night: Musical Madness from Japan," at Limelight on Thursday, and "Nuevos Flamencos," at Town Hall on Friday. Alternative-rock fans have plenty of options, too, such as Babes in Toyland and Screaming Trees (Wednesday at the Academy), My Bloody Valentine and Superchunk (Friday at the Ritz), and a clutch of bands from the Seattle label Sub Pop (Saturday at City). In the none-of-the-above category, there are some worthy free shows at Central Park SummerStage: the Kronos Quartet on Wednesday evening, and a reggae bill on Sunday afternoon.

A pass to all of these shows costs sixty-nine dollars (in advance); if you want to attend the seminar as well, the price jumps to three hundred and eighty dollars. (Call 473-4343 for information.) Though you'll undoubtedly have your eye on certain shows, there's much to be said for wandering. We like to think of these evenings as citywide treasure hunts. (N.B.: Many of the shows listed below are also part of New Music Nights. Nonparticipants may buy tickets to individual shows, but keep in mind that you'll be vying for space with an expected seventy-five hundred pass-bearers.)

(A highly arbitrary listing, in which boldface type is used to pick out the more notable performers in town.... ¶ Musicians and night-club proprietors live complicated lives that are subject to last-minute change; it is therefore always advisable to call ahead.)

**Algonquin Hotel**, 59 W. 44th St. (840-6800)—The **wiseguys** can currently be found in the woody nook known as the Oak Room. Their program features such composers as Jerome Kern, Harold Arlen, Ray Noble, and Maltby and Shire. Shows at nine-thirty Tuesdays through Thursdays, and at nine-thirty and eleven-thirty on Fridays and Saturdays.

**Ballroom**, 253 W. 28th St. (244-3005)—A tony cabaret attained by passing through an opulent tapas restaurant; if you haven't had dinner, you may never make it to the show. **ilan chester** begins a two-week engagement

***AIG Issues Forum***

# Isn’t it time to st
# and start cleaning up

## SUPERFUND ISN’T WORKING.

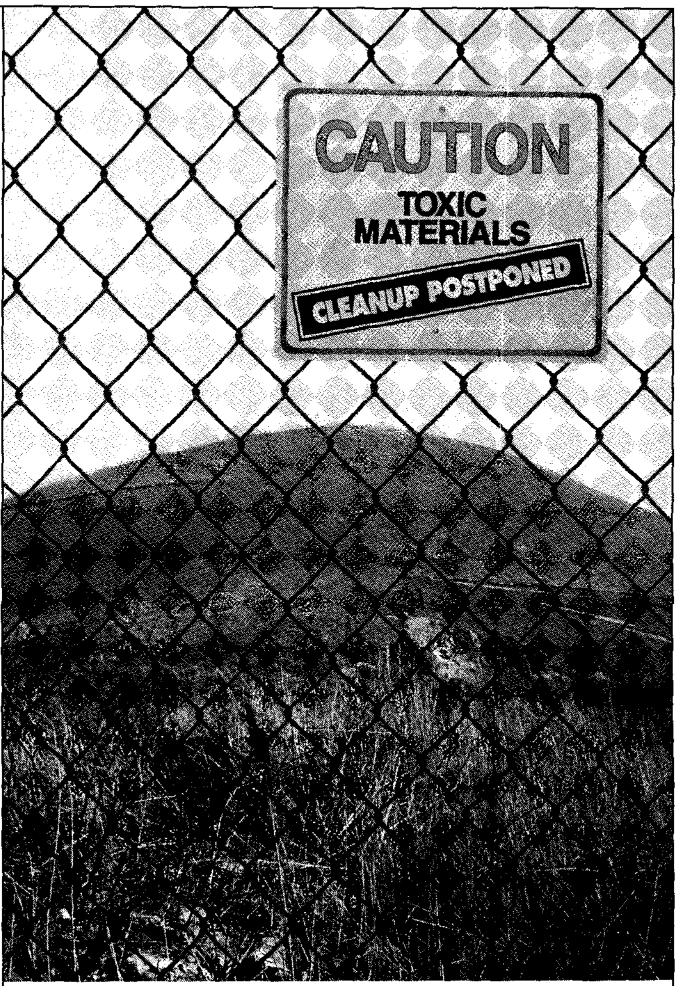
For more than a decade, the Federal Superfund program, designed to clean up America’s waste sites, has been a gold mine for lawyers and consultants.

Billions have been spent on Superfund since 1980, but cleanup has been completed at fewer than 5 percent of the nation’s 1,200 most dangerous waste sites.

Where has the money gone? An enormous amount has been spent arguing and litigating over who should pay for cleanup. When Congress created Superfund, it envisioned fast, efficient cleanups that would be funded by finding those responsible at each and every site and making them pay. While this sounds good in theory, in reality this approach has buried Congress’s vision under an avalanche of litigation and expensive, lengthy negotiations.

## WHAT WENT WRONG?

First, many sites were created by waste disposal that took place 20, 30 or 40 years ago, or even longer. This can make identifying everyone connected with a site—finding records to prove who has owned and operated it, who sent what waste, how much and where—expensive and time-consuming.



Second, Superfund holds anyone who has ever owned, used or transported waste to a site liable for the entire cost of cleanup, even if no laws were broken at the time and even if they contributed only a tiny fraction of the waste. This forces those identified at Superfund sites—whether they be large corporations, small businesses, local governments, hospitals,

# wasting millions America's waste sites?

universities or even individuals—to spend more time and money looking for others to share the costs.

With cleanup costs averaging $26 million per site and some sites costing in the hundreds of millions, it's little wonder that organizations and private parties spend years in negotiations and litigation. In fact, at some sites, more money is spent on determining who will pay than on cleanup itself. This does a lot for lawyers and consultants but very little for the environment.

Even the Administrator of the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) commented, "One of the sad truths about the program is that so much money has gone to people in three-piece suits and not moon suits."

## IT'S TIME FOR SOMETHING BETTER: THE NATIONAL ENVIRONMENTAL TRUST FUND.

Superfund's goal of cleaning up the environment has been badly undercut by this fund-raising system. The result has been unacceptable delays in cleanup and enormous legal and other transaction costs paid for by government, the private sector and insurers. Isn't it time to stop this waste of resources and get on with cleaning up the environment?

At AIG, we think so. America needs a system to promote fast and efficient cleanup, reduce unnecessary legal fees, spread the cost of cleanup broadly, and encourage responsible waste management practices today.

To accomplish this, we have proposed creating the National Environmental Trust Fund (NETF). The NETF would be a special fund, like the National Highway Trust Fund, dedicated only to cleaning up old Superfund sites. It would be paid for by a broad range of businesses and organizations without regard to liability.

## YOU CAN HELP.

We've waited long enough and spent far too much money in the courtrooms. We're urging the President and Congress to act now by creating the NETF to improve Superfund.

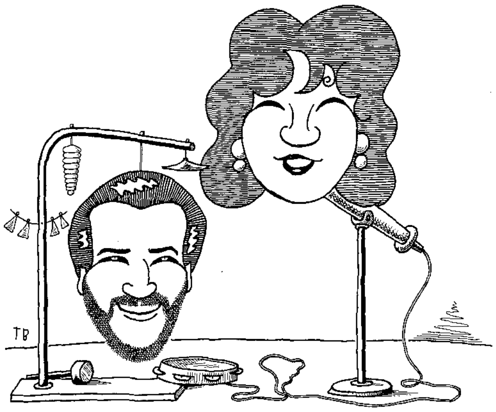
If you'd like more information about the National Environmental Trust Fund and what you can do about Superfund, please write Mr. M.R. Greenberg, Chairman, American International Group, Inc., 70 Pine Street, New York, NY 10270.

**AIG** **World leaders in insurance and financial services.**

on June 23. Shows Tuesdays through Thursdays at nine, Fridays and Saturdays at nine and eleven-fifteen.

**BIRDLAND,** *2745* Broadway, at 105th St. (749-2228)—This northern restaurant-bar, an airy, two-tiered space with pastel walls and potted greenery, is a shade too slick for Columbia students but just right for post-collegiate jazz fans. The name is taken from the long-gone midtown pleasure dome that featured Bird himself. This week: **FREDDIE BRYANT'S** quartet (June 17); **PUCCI AMANDA JHONES** (June 18); the **GEORGE ADAMS** quartet (June 19-20); and **ROBBIE ROBINSON** (June 21). Music from nine. Dining.

**BLUE NOTE,** 131 W. 3rd St., near Sixth Ave. (475-8592)—Jazz, mirrors, a gift shop, and, of course, those incredible shrinking aisles that turn a midset dash to the rest room into something of a steeplechase. **MARIO BAUZA** and his Afro-Cuban Jazz Orchestra share a bill with **KENNY BURRELL'S** quintet June 16-21; the week beginning on June 23 belongs to the husband-and-wife singer-and-percussion team of **FLORA PURIM** and **AIRTO MOREIRA,** whose ensemble, Fourth World, will be joined by **RAY BARRETTO'S** sextet. First set is at nine. Dining.



*Airto Moreira and Flora Purim at the Blue Note*

**BOTTOM LINE,** 15 W. 4th St., at Mercer St. (228-6300)—A big, pleasant room where they pack them in until someone says uncle. There's been more and more talk about the songwriter sessions that radio personality **VIN SCELSA** hosts here every so often. The performances are called "In Their Own Words." Scelsa's shows are loose, informal bull sessions in which songwriters sit around playing tunes they've written—or wish they'd written—and holding forth about their craft. The next installment is scheduled for June 19, and will include the one-man band known as **TAJ MAHAL.** He has a rich, scratchy voice, plays everything from romping barrelhouse piano to lulling finger-picking guitar, and is given to wearing panama hats. Traditional country blues are his strongest suit, and he delivers them with such clarity and ease that you feel as if you were sitting on a backwoods porch. Other events: **JOHN MARTYN** on June 20; **CHET ATKINS** and **JERRY REED** on June 22. Shows at eight and eleven. Burgers, fries, and other things to make your heart beat faster.

**BRADLEY'S,** 70 University Pl., at 11th St. (228-6440)—A neighborhood bar in the heart of N.Y.U. country. It's advisable to get all your talking done between sets, because, once the first chord is struck, the audience here—with a little help from the management—becomes as quiet as a church congregation. **MIKE LE DONNE, KENNY WASHINGTON,** and **PETER WASHINGTON** are in action through June 20. **DONALD BROWN, STEVE WILSON,** and **CHARNETT MOFFETT** begin work on June 22. Music from ten. Dining.

**CARLYLE HOTEL,** Madison Ave. at 76th St. (744-1600)—Home of the Café Carlyle, an elegant, pastel-muralled room that may make you forget what year it is. Singer-pianist **BOBBY SHORT,** who seems to have some kind of sublease on the place, is the current attraction. Music Tuesdays through Saturdays at eight-forty-five and ten-forty-five. . . . ¶ Across the hall, in Bemelmans Bar, **BARBARA CARROLL** presides at the piano from nine-thirty Tuesdays through Saturdays.

**CBGB & OMFUG,** 315 Bowery, at Bleecker St. (982-4052)—Rock and roll always sounds best in a dump, which may be why this legendary club is still thriving: the management has had the good sense not to renovate. In recent years, CB's has become something of an empire; the club is now flanked by a pizzeria/boutique on one side and a bar/performance space on the other. All your shopping needs can be taken care of at one convenient location. Music from eight on Sundays and Mondays, from eight-thirty Tuesdays through Thursdays, and from nine-thirty on Fridays and Saturdays.

**CLUB 53,** Sixth Ave. at 53rd St. (261-5853)—A new cabaret in the New York Hilton. It's a pleasant spot, with a mirrored bar, lamplight, and sofas that you can sink into. **JOHNNY MAESTRO AND THE BROOKLYN BRIDGE,** a pop group best known for its 1969 hit version of Jimmy Webb's "Worst That Could Happen," is appearing June 16-20. **LESLEY GORE** begins a run on June 23. Shows Tuesdays through Saturdays at eight-forty-five and ten-forty-five. Dining.

**GREENE STREET,** 101 Greene St. (925-2415)—You could almost dock a 747 in this SoHo restaurant-bar. The space is designed for eye-popping, cinematic effect, with murals and catwalks and footlights. The cuisine is less haute than you might expect, but you're really paying for the atmosphere, and for the jazz, which is provided by the **HILTON RUIZ** trio June 17-20 and by **PETE MALINVERNI'S** threesome from June 24. Music begins from between six and seven.

**J'S,** 2581 Broadway, at 97th St. (666-3600)—An Upper West Side jazz room, one steep flight up from the hurly-burly. Jazz people are on the premises nightly. The schedule, in part: **STEVE ESKIN'S** quartet on June 18; the **JUDY BARNETT** quintet on June 19; **RANDA MC NAMARA'S** foursome on June 20; and **GROOVELAYA** on June 21. Music from eight-thirty Sundays through Thursdays, and from nine Fridays and Saturdays. Dining.

**KNICKERBOCKER,** 33 University Pl., at 9th St. (228-8490)—Brass rails, vintage posters, Hirschfeld drawings, a menu full of items like bangers and mash, and a piano. Knickerbocker is an airy, good-spirited place and, while music often takes a back seat to conversation, some able piano-and-bass teams turn up regularly. June 17-18 belong to pianist **MIKE LONGO;** he'll return on June 20 accompanied by bassist **PAUL WEST.** Music from nine-forty-five.

**KNITTING FACTORY,** 47 E. Houston St., near Mulberry St. (219-3055)—Situated in a neighborhood that boasts the Puck Building to the west and a host of windshield washers to the east, this modest space provides a forum for free-thinking musicians. Beat and melody are optional, "music" and "noise" relative terms. **MARC RIBOT,** a downtown guitar hero, will be here on June 20, along with Low Road. Music after nine.

**MANNY'S CAR WASH,** 1558 Third Ave., at 87th St. (369-2583)—This blues bar stands apart from the Upper East Side's usual array of singles bars, and has become a big draw for the neighborhood's army of post-collegiates. The neon beer signs, Manny's caps, and funky drink concoctions lend the place a frat-house aura, but don't let that put you off: this long, dark room is a good spot to catch blues artists both major and minor. Sets from nine-fifteen, except Sundays, when they begin at eight-forty-five.

**MARQUEE,** 547 W. 21st St. (929-3257)—If the hero of a movie walked down this creepy, semi-deserted block, the audience would be throwing things at the screen and shouting "Turn back! Turn back!" Thanks to this fine alternative-music club, though, there's usually a fairly steady flow of traffic through these parts. The L.A.-based group **L7** performs on June 18. The band, part of the recent wave of angry, aggressive, and ear-splitting female rockers, recently released its big-label début, "Bricks Are Heavy." **ECHO AND THE BUNNYMEN,** the seminal English post-punk band, who have carried on after the defection of their former leader, Ian McCulloch, appear on June 19. On June 20, **A HOUSE** and other groups share a bill.

**MAXWELL'S,** 1039 Washington St., Hoboken. (1-201 798-4064)—A plain blue back room whose far wall is decorated with round things: a Frisbee, some singles, a drum head, and the woofer from a speaker cabinet, to name a few. The beer of choice here is Rolling Rock—by a landslide—and the crowd may make you feel as if you have a midterm to study for, but many of the bands that play here today will be playing somewhere more expensive tomorrow. **L7** and **KINGMAKER** perform on June 17; Gray Matter, Wool, and Mule on June 18; Shudder to Think and Basehead on June 19; the 3D's, Velocity Girl, and the Dharma Bums on June 20. **SHONEN KNIFE,** who appear on June 21, are an all-female Japanese band who have something of a cult following on these shores. Their songs, which are sung in English and have titles like "Twist Barbie" and "I Like Public Baths," are clunkily produced, charmingly wooden attempts at American-style pop. The group may be instant camp, but their sunny, cartoonish numbers have a way of lodging themselves in your brain. June 2[illegible] belongs to **STEVE WYNN,** the former lead singer of Dream Syndicate, who recently released a new solo album, "Dazzling Display." Show times vary.

**RAINBOW & STARS,** 30 Rockefeller Plaza. (632-5000)—Not to be confused with its richer cousin, the Rainbow Room, which is just down the hall. There, you'll find expansive Art Deco glitter; here, intimate nineties glitter. The performers, with their backs to the window, compete with a view of the Hudson, the George Washington Bridge, and beyond. **SUSAN ANTON,** the actress and singer, who was lately seen in the cast of "The Will Rogers Follies," is in the middle of a run here. Shows from nine. Dining. Closed Mondays.

**RED BLAZER TOO,** 349 W. 46th St. (262-3112)—A place where a fella and a gal can put on the feedbag, get a little tight, and cut a rug. Mondays belong to the Smith Street Jazz Society, Tuesdays and Fridays to **VINCE GIORDANO AND THE NIGHTHAWKS,** Thursdays to Stan Rubin's big band, and Saturdays to Bob Cantwell and His Stompers. Show times vary.

**RITZ,** 254 W. 54th St. (541-8900)—This decaying theatre, once the home of Studio 54, is now the site of one of the city's biggest, oldest, and loudest rock clubs, which was formerly located in the East Village. The club features a broad stage, mobile-home-size speakers, plenty of room to shimmy, and, for the sedentary, a giant Big Brother video screen. **KMFDM, BARKMARKET,** and Cop Shoot Cop are here on June 17. **MY BLOODY VALENTINE,** who perform on June 19, are the kingpins of England's dream-pop, or "shoe-gazers," scene. Their sound hinges upon a modest but potent technical device: a layering of wavy amplified guitar noise that bends and moans and defies gravity. The effect can be mesmerizing. More than that, it's fresh and bracingly modern. You can already hear it infiltrating the pop world—on U2's recent album, for example. In performance, however, My Bloody Valentine can come off as self-indulgent, artsy noisemakers. At times, their music sounds like an express train taking forever to pass through a station. Caribbean sounds will fill the club on June 20, when an "Antilles Night" will feature five groups: traditional and zouk outfits from Martinique (Kali at nine, Ralph Thamar at ten, Malavoi at eleven, and Marcé et Toumpak at midnight), as well as Haiti's **BOUKMAN EKSPERYANS** (at one), whose *voudou-rara* style blends traditional Haitian voodoo sounds with carnival-inspired rhythms. Show times vary.

**RODEO BAR,** 375 Third Ave., at 27th St. (683-6500)—A Western theme bar attached to a Mexican restaurant. You get walls designed to simulate a log cabin; a buffalo head that blows smoke through its nostrils; a horse trailer that's been converted into a bar; peanuts for eating and, occasionally, throwing. But wait, there's more: a TV that plays tapes of rodeos, New Mexico memorabilia, and live music nightly—country, blues, folk, rock, hillbilly. Shows from ten-thirty.

***RUSSIAN TEA ROOM,** 150 W. 57th St. (265-0947)*—Known for, among countless other things, a scene in "Manhattan" in which Woody Allen tries to teach his young son how to score. Upstairs, there's a small, red-gold-and-green cabaret. **MARGARET WHITING,** whose father, Richard Whiting, wrote a string of fine pop numbers in the twenties, performs on June 21. Ms. Whiting's biggest hit, "A Tree in a Meadow," appeared back in 1948, but her voice is still as clear as it was on the day Johnny Mercer told her "You sing like a trumpet." Shows Sundays at eight and, upon demand, ten-thirty. Dining and, of course, drinking.

**Song of Singapore Theatre,** 17 Irving Pl., at 15th St.—This is the new home of the New York Swing Dance Society, a group of Lindy Hop enthusiasts who've been putting on Sunday-night dance parties for several years now (the Cat Club was their former home base). Swing music at a mock forties Singapore night club—the musical "Song of Singapore" is put on here—may sound like an odd juxtaposition, but who cares? Strike up the band. The JOE CARSON big band is here on June 21. Sets begin at eight. For information on the Society, call 696-9737.

**Sounds of Brazil,** 204 Varick St., at W. Houston St. (243-4940)—A great grass hut decorated with a fruit-and-bamboo motif and dedicated to such things as calypso, reggae, and bossa nova. S.O.B.'s dance floor is always jumping with Rastas and N.Y.U. students, and there's always someone onstage shouting "Put your hands in the air!" Three Mexican rock bands will perform on June 19: Sangre Asteca, Kerigma, and Café Tecuba. On June 20, the Spanish rock bands Celta Cortos, Os Resentidos, Tancat Per Defuncio, and Tahures Zurdos will hold forth. Closed Sundays. Dining.

**Sweet Basil,** 88 Seventh Ave. S., at Bleecker St. (242-1785)—An itinerary stop for the international jazz groupies who, on any given night, can be seen roaming the streets of the Village. Up front, there's a glass-enclosed sidewalk café; in back is a larger room, with a pressed-tin ceiling, red brick, and more pinewood than a ski lodge. DOROTHY DONEGAN, who's here June 16-21, has a virtuosic technique that reflects both her classical training and her days as an Art Tatum protégée. But she's equally renowned for the vaudevillian antics that have been the trademark of her fifty-year career: dancing, stomping, rolling her head, impersonating jazz divas, and generally raising Cain. The CHRISTOPHER HOLLYDAY quartet begins a run on June 23. An electrified big band belonging to trumpeter MILES EVANS is in action on Mondays. Tee-off time is ten. Dining.

**Tramps,** 45 W. 21st St. (727-7788)—A broad, spacious, and agreeable club, located near what was once called the Ladies' Mile but might now be termed the pool-hall district. The pillared, loftlike room is decorated in a hodgepodge, vaguely Bourbon Street manner, and sight lines are above average. But the sound system has been known to be temperamental. A host of New Music Nights bands will be here June 16-21, including JIMMIE DALE GILMORE, JOE HENRY, KEVIN WELCH, and other Western-minded groups on June 20. Music from eight on weeknights and from eight-thirty on Fridays and Saturdays.

**Village Vanguard,** 178 Seventh Ave. S., at 11th St. (255-4037)—The late Max Gordon, who opened this holiest of jazz shrines in 1935, once described the club's early patrons as a mix of "poets, W.P.A. writers, hustlers, broads on the make, and moochers." TOMMY FLANAGAN'S trio is in action June 16-21; IRA SULLIVAN'S quartet begins work on June 23. The VANGUARD JAZZ ORCHESTRA holds sway on Mondays. Music after nine-thirty.

**Wetlands,** 161 Hudson St. (966-4225)—A relatively young club that has already managed to make a scene. Wetlands is usually thought of as a Deadhead hangout, but the club has also been the launching pad for a generation of young New York bands like Blues Traveler and the Spin Doctors. Shows here can be absurdly sweaty and tight—the club seems to have a hard time turning people away—and it can be hard to get a view of stage. Still, Wetlands is such a maze of a place that there's always some mellow corner to retire to. BLACK 47, which will be here on June 19, is an exuberant pub band that features a trombonist, a uillean-pipes player, and a singer-guitarist who sings strident variations on the Irishman-in-New-York theme. A formidable grouping of rap and hybrid-rap bands can be found here on June 20. Shows from ten.

**Zinno,** 126 W. 13th St. (924-5182)—One of those snazzy eateries you've seen nestled amid brownstones in the Village and always wondered about. The food is Italian, the atmosphere is pastels and soft lights, and the musicians, who set up in a room between the bar and the dining room, are first-rate. KIRK LIGHTSEY and CECIL MC BEE work out through June 20; JOHN BUNCH, JAY LEONHART, and BUCKY PIZZARELLI begin a week-long stint on June 22. Music from eight every night but Sundays, when sets begin at seven-thirty.

## EDGE OF NIGHT LIFE

The hair-flattening weather was tying up traffic so badly that two young ladies in an Isuzu Trooper found themselves blocking the box at Fifth Avenue and 58th Street for three lights. No way were they going to make it to Hampton Bays at this rate. So they hung a right, put the vehicle in a garage, and dragged their weekenders to the ticket booth of the Fine Arts Theatre just in time for the next showing of "Howards End." "A commitment," one of them said when she saw the running time. "At least traffic will ease up by then," said the other. So they went in.

When they emerged from the movie, however, the downpour was worse and so was the traffic—which meant that their predicament was about to get worse, too. Suddenly, the two women were faced with a social nightmare as acute as Margaret Schlegel's when she encountered the starving unemployed at her future stepdaughter's garden wedding—they were stuck in the city with *Them!*

From Memorial Day until at least Labor Day, anyone who uses the word "beachy" regularly will tell you that night life in Manhattan is taken over by the Men and Women Who Don't Go Away. "If we'd taken the jitney, at least we'd be with people we know. Sorta. It could have been a goof," one of the women whined. "Now what?" The pair scuttled over to Arizona 206, where the two guys sitting next to them—one with fringed, bleached jeans tucked into his boots, the other with his nickname embroidered on the back of his ponyskin jacket—had barely started carving their steaks before offering to take the women to an outlaw party. "Where is it?," one of them asked. "We don't know," said the fringed one. "We're getting directions in front of Mt. Sinai." "You want us to go to a strange place with you, and we don't even know you?" snapped his potential date. (In the Hamptons, clubs like Element announce "outlaw" parties by printing the address in the local paper.) "What else are you going to do?" he countered. "Walk around town with your luggage all night?"' By the third Arizona Lemonade, the stranded twosome had relented.

The party was on the river at Horatio Street. The women, who didn't know a soul, said they hated it, but they stayed until dawn. Late that afternoon, one of them showed up in Hampton Bays with a date—the guy with the nickname on his jacket.

## IN ANOTHER CATEGORY— PERFORMANCE ART, ETC.

**"She Who Once Was the Helmet-Maker's Beautiful Wife"**—A play about an old Hungarian woman on her deathbed, by Peter Halasz and Seth Tillett. With Messrs. Halasz and Tillett, Cora Fisher, Agnes Santha, and Rebecca Wright. (Performing Garage, 33 Wooster St. 966-9796. June 17-21 at 8. Through June 28.)

**"Lesbians Who Kill"**—A reprise of Deb Margolin's play, recently seen at La Mama. With Peggy Shaw and Lois Weaver. (One Dream, 232 West Broadway. 274-1450. June 17-20 and June 24 at 8. Through July 25.)

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# ART

THE Richard Prince retrospective at the Whitney (through July 12) is a truly weird show, at once airy to the point of ghostliness and so obsessively focussed that it may make you wince. But this artist's work has been peculiar from the time of its first appearances in galleries, a decade or so ago, and this exhibition, eerie as it is, is one Whitney retrospective that feels as if it needed to be held. Never before have the shriller and more plangent notes within Prince's generally hollow repertoire been so audibly conveyed. Prince is a lapsed painter and former photo researcher at Time-Life. At the Whitney, we find his appropriated advertising and magazine imagery—most famously his rephotographed, reformatted renditions of the Marlboro Man campaign—and his oddball series of wall reliefs, from around a year ago, made of wood-and-fibreglass casts of mail-order car hoods. The show also contains a large number of paintings and drawings involving assorted cartoons, captions, and one-liners, some of which have appeared in these pages over the years, as well as a battery of standup routines, à la Henny Youngman and Rodney Dangerfield, about pink elephants and ugly wives. Prince copies out these jokes by hand while sabotaging their original meanings.

Prince is an inspired subversive who can make routine stuff seem perfectly sinister. His subjects are hoary American stereotypes of celebrity, class, and, especially, sex—from those smoking cowboys in their Jurassic settings to a photomontage of slutty biker chicks—but his point of view is so thoroughly ambivalent that it seems otherworldly. At times, he seems to be speaking to us from the hereafter. This show is, among other things, an anthology directed to the generation that helped make alcoholic patter, sleazoid fame, and misogynist humor a sort of unabashed national pastime.

## MUSEUMS AND LIBRARIES

**Metropolitan Museum,** Fifth Ave. at 82nd St.—"Korean Ceramics from the Ataka Collection" includes more than a hundred examples of celadon ware and other glazed ceramics from the tenth century through the nineteenth. Through July 12. . . . ¶ A large gathering of paintings, drawings, and prints by the Paduan Renaissance master Andrea Mantegna. Through July 12. . . . ¶ A retrospective of black-and-white and color photographs by Helen Levitt. Through June 28. . . . ¶ "Modern Design: 1890-1990" shows off the museum's holdings in twentieth-century furniture, architectural and design drawings, glass, ceramics, and other objects. . . . ¶ The recent donation of the Perls collection—a hundred and sixty-three objects from the kingdom of Benin—has substantially redefined the museum's African holdings. This exhibition of the collection is a welcome relief from the rigid theatre of many of the museum's blockbusters: it enables viewers to make their own discoveries. Through Sept. 13. . . . ¶ "The Lotus Transcendent." The Eilenberg collection, from which this show has been selected, is not particularly comprehensive and does not contain many grand masterpieces, but it does sparkle in many unexpected ways. For instance, it includes a group of bronze sculptures from Indonesia that many consider to be the finest privately assembled collection of such material in the world. Through June 28. . . . **Note:** The museum's roof garden, planted with eight sculptures by Rodin, is open when the weather permits. (Open Tuesdays through Sundays, 9:30 to 5:15, and Friday and Saturday evenings until 8:45.)

**Museum of Modern Art,** 11 W. 53rd St.—"In the Realm of Architecture." This retrospective of the work of Louis Kahn (1901-74) includes about three hundred drawings, sketches, models, and photographs. Through Aug. 18. . . . ¶ "Antoni Tàpies in Print" presents more than a hundred lithographs, intaglio prints, and illustrated books, from the forties to the present, by the Catalan artist. Through Aug. 9. . . . ¶ Félix González-Torres has created a piece for the "Projects" series that consists of an enlarged black-and-white image of a slept-in, empty double bed; the same image appears on billboards throughout the city. Through June 30. . . . ¶ Photographs by Gertrude Käsebier (1852-1934), including genre scenes, allegorical compositions, and portraits of New Yorkers, Native Americans, and fellow-photographers. Through July 14. . . . ¶ "More than One Photography" features sixty post-1980 works that incorporate photography in one way or another, drawn from each of the museum's six curatorial departments. Through July 19. . . . ¶ Twenty-three videotapes, mostly from the seventies, by Joan Jonas, Nam June Paik, and William Wegman. Through July 16. . . . ¶ A display of glass and ceramic tableware by Finnish designer Kaj Franck. (Open daily, except Wednesdays, 11 to 6, and Thursday evenings until 9.)

**Guggenheim Museum,** Fifth Ave. at 89th St.—The museum's reopening is scheduled for June 28.

**Whitney Museum of American Art,** Madison Ave. at 75th St.—An exhibition of landscapes, seascapes, portraits, and boxing scenes by painter and lithographer George Bellows (1882-1925). Through Aug. 30. (A show of prints by Bellows is at Sheehan, 41 E. 57th St.; open Mondays, closed Saturdays, through June 26.). . .¶ Eighty-five works by Richard Prince, including his "re-photography," drawings, collages, silk-screen paintings, and wall reliefs. Through July 12. . . . ¶ A well-framed, expertly installed, compact exhibition of recent "Pastels" by Joan Mitchell. They're beautiful: vibrant, nimble, and utterly authoritative. Mitchell is in peak form here. Through June 21. . . .¶ The first part of a show of recent additions to the museum's collection is currently on view; more than seventy paintings and sculptures are included. Through July 5. (Open Wednesdays, and Fridays through Sundays, 11 to 6; Thursdays, 1 to 8.)

**Brooklyn Museum,** Eastern Parkway—"Tacit Transit," a new installation, by Korean-born artist Jin Soo Kim, that consists of wire-mesh modules and found objects. Through Sept. 6. . . . ¶ A display of first-edition etchings from Giovanni Battista Piranesi's "Carceri d'Invenzioni" group. Through July 26. . . . ¶ "Biomorphicism and Organic Abstraction in Twentieth-Century Decorative Arts." (Open Wednesdays through Sundays, 10 to 5.)

**American Museum of Natural History,** Central Park W. at 79th St.—"The Streets of Dai Fau," a show of photographs by Arnold Genthe (1869-1946) which depict San Francisco's Chinatown before 1906. Through June 30. . . . ¶ "Global Warming—Understanding the Forecast," a large exhibition developed by the museum and the Environmental Defense Fund. (Open daily, 10 to 5:45, and Friday and Saturday evenings until 8:45.)

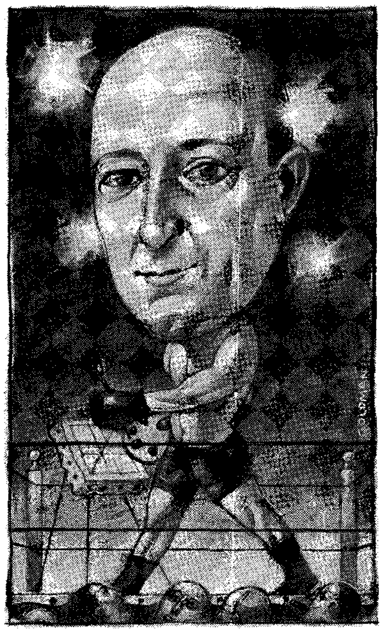
**American Craft Museum,** 40 W. 53rd St.—A show that documents several stages in the design of Frank Gehry's new bentwood furniture (several models of which were seen a few months ago at MOMA). Included are original drawings, prototypes, production models, photo-murals, and a history of bentwood furniture. Through Aug. 2. . . . ¶ "A Decade of Craft" highlights works in glass and wood that the museum has recently acquired. Through July 26. . . . ¶ Three site-specific installations: Sam Gilliam's "Windows Go Orange (e.e. cummings)," Robert Kushner's "Butterflies," and Dale Chihuly's "Niijima Floats." (Open Tuesdays, 10 to 8; Wednesdays through Sundays, 10 to 5.)

**Asia Society,** Park Ave. at 70th St.—Fifty works by the colorful and prolific painter Chang Dai-chien (1899-1983). Through July 19. . . . ¶ "The Cosmic Dancer." The tenth-century Hindu bronze of Shiva Nataraja, Lord of the Dance, is the centerpiece of this exhibition of fifty bronze, stone, and wood sculptures from India and Southeast Asia. Through June 28. (Open Tuesdays through Saturdays, 11 to 6; Sundays, noon to 5.)

**Bronx Museum of the Arts,** 1040 Grand Concourse—Eight paintings from the "North American Trophy Room" series, by Honduran artist Francisco Alvarado-Juárez. Through Aug. 2. . . . ¶ The museum's twelfth "Artist in the Marketplace" exhibition includes thirty-six emerging painters, sculptors, photographers, and installation artists. Through Aug. 2. . . . ¶ "Contemporary Painting and Calligraphy from Japan." Through Aug. 2. (Open Wednesdays through Fridays, 10 to 5; Saturdays and Sundays, 1 to 6.)

**Cooper-Hewitt Museum,** Fifth Ave. at 91st St.—Since its founding, in 1897, by the three Hewitt sisters, whose goal was to elevate taste in America, the Cooper-Hewitt has accumulated a marvellous albeit rarely displayed library of the decorative arts. On view since last summer, "A Design Resource" is a rotating sampler of nearly a thousand objects drawn from the collection. "Animals in Design" and "Designs for Seating" are among the new sections. Through Aug. 30. (Open Tuesdays, 10 to 9, with no admission charge from 5 to 9; Wednesdays through Saturdays, 10 to 5; Sundays, noon to 5.)

**Frick Collection,** 1 E. 70th St.—"An Album of Interiors" consists of more than sixty nineteenth-century watercolors, from two private family collections—one American and one European. Through Aug. 23. (Open daily, except Mondays, 10 to 6; Sundays 1 to 6.)



George Bellows at the Whitney

**Jewish Museum,** at the New-York Historical Society, 170 Central Park W., at 77th St.—"Bridges and Boundaries: African-Americans and American Jews." This show—comprising three hundred and fifty art works, photographs, and documents—explores the complex relationship of coöperation and tension between the two groups. Through July 19. (Open Tuesdays, Wednesdays, and Sundays, 11 to 5; Thursdays, 11 to 8; Fridays, 11 to 3.)

**Morgan Library,** 29 E. 36th St.—"Sketching at Home and Abroad" presents more than a hundred British landscape drawings and watercolors—from the literal to the lyrical—by Turner, Constable, Wilson, Gainsborough, and others. Through Aug. 2. . . . ¶ Puss in Boots, the Master Cat, is the subject of an exhibition that spans three hundred years' worth of illustrations, beginning with Charles Perrault's original manuscript of Mother Goose stories. Through Aug. 9. . . . ¶ "Leaping the Fence," a show that examines, through illustrated treatises, the development of the English landscape garden. Through Aug. 2. (Open Tuesdays through Saturdays, 10:30 to 5, Sundays, 1 to 5.)

**Museum of American Folk Art,** Columbus Ave. at 65th St.—"The Art of Embellishment" features nearly fifty painted and stenciled objects—including doors, pieces of furniture, tinware, and textiles—from eighteenth- and nineteenth-century American homes. Through Sept. 6. . . . ¶ The American hand-carved walking stick (more varieties than you can shake one at) is the subject of "Step Lively: The Art of the Folk Cane." Through Sept. 13. (Open daily, except Mondays, 11:30 to 7:30.)

**The New Museum,** 583 Broadway—"The Art Mall: A Social Space." The silly interactive art in this mall includes "stores"—a manicurist, a calligrapher who will write anything in Chinese, and a safe-sex shop with rubber gloves and colored condoms—that are low on spark but high on earnestness. There are, fortunately, two works of some interest: Barbara Pollock and Grai St. Clair Rice's video, which informs viewers of some telling facts about controlled environments and free speech; and Tamás Banovich's ramshackle "comfort station," where the artist will wash your feet. On a different note, Todd Alden and Steve Ausbury's "Artkards," with portraits and "career highlights" of art-world luminaries, are amusing. Through June 28. . . . ¶ "Last Words," a window video installation by Seyed Alavi, presents images of Oakland high-school students, superimposed with their response to this proposal: "Imagine that you had the opportunity to speak on national television, but are limited to a single word. Consider further that after you say your word you must take a vow of silence. In essence, this word would be your last." Yikes! Through June 28. (Open Wednesdays, Thursdays, and Sundays, noon to 6; Fridays and Saturdays, noon to 8.)

**New-York Historical Society,** 170 Central Park W., at 77th St.—A show chronicling the design, construction, and urban context of New York's City Hall (1803-12). Forty-seven drawings, along with watercolors, prints, books, and a model, illuminate the neoclassical edifice. Through June 28. . . . ¶ "Forever Wild: The Adirondack Experience" presents two hundred paintings, photographs, architectural plans, pieces of furniture, and other objects. Through July 12. (Open Tuesdays through Fridays, 11 to 5, and Thursday evenings until 8; Sundays, 11 to 5.)

**New York Public Library,** Fifth Ave. at 42nd St.—"Hail, Delirium!," a show of illustrated books and prints by Dorothea Tanning. Through July 18. (Third Floor Gallery.). . . ¶ One of the more comprehensive shows in the current crop of Walt Whitman centenary celebrations is "In Life or Death Forever": a hundred and fifty manuscripts, books, photographs, and letters culled from both the Berg and Oscar Lion collections. (Berg Exhibition Room.). . . ¶ The forays of Percy Bysshe Shelley into the political arena are chronicled in the letters, manuscripts, and bank checks on view in "Shelley: Unacknowledged Legislator." Through Aug. 8. (Edna Barnes Salomon Room.). . . ¶ "On the Edge" is a show of more than two hundred black-and-white and color photographs from the covers and pages of *Vogue.* Through Aug. 1. (Gottesman Exhibition Hall.) (Open Tuesdays and Wednesdays, 11 to 6; Thursdays through Saturdays, 10 to 6.)

**Isamu Noguchi Garden Museum,** 32-37 Vernon Blvd., at 33rd Rd., Long Island City—Noguchi (1904-88) designed this oasis for more than two hundred and fifty of his own sculptures. The entire range of his work is on view, from the early surrealistic biomorphic sculptures through several types of stone carvings, and including documentation of his prodigious public-art projects. The centerpiece of the museum is a peaceful, ivy-walled garden dotted with sculptures. (Open Wednesdays and Saturdays, 11 to 6.)

**P.S. 1,** 46-01 21st St., Long Island City—"Slow Art: Painting in New York Now," Alanna Heiss's show of paintings by a hundred and three more or less New York-based artists, has no theme, no pretensions, no stylistic point of view, no concentration on either fame or obscurity, no axe to grind. All this—plus the fact that most artists submitted what they must have felt were strong pieces—may be why the show is so pleasant. It's an idiosyncratic and uneven "salon" exhibition that doesn't know it. There are no nineteenth-century airs or archly cluttered walls. The installations, throughout a dozen or so rooms on two floors of this big old building, are in fact surprisingly breezy—the rooms are almost underhung, believe it or not. By the end of your tour, you might find yourself wishing a few *more* artists had been included. Highlights include works by Roy Lichtenstein, Ellsworth Kelly, Alex Katz, Byron Kim, Peter Hopkins, Jane Kaplowitz, Matthew Weinstein, and Stephen Mueller. Through June 21. (Open Wednesdays through Sundays, noon to 6.)

### GALLERIES—UPTOWN

(Unless otherwise noted, galleries are open Tuesdays through Saturdays from around 10 or 11 to between 5 and 6.)

**Georg Baselitz**—This show centers on the artist's first inverted paintings, from the early seventies, which are both dazzling and modest. It may come as a surprise to see how realistically they are rendered, particularly the three that were painted by finger—an apt tool for an art that is at once cerebral and personal. These are unsettling paintings: the people depicted in them are both disembodied forms and real people detached from a real world, like dummies in an ethnographic museum. Through June 26. (Werner, 21 E. 67th St. Open Mondays; closed Saturdays. . . . ¶ Marks, 1018 Madison Ave., at 79th St., has an exhibition of recent drawings by Baselitz. Through June 26.)

**James Rosenquist**—Rosenquist is not always thought of as one of our great painters, but this show of his early Pop paintings, from 1961 to 1964, could well inspire second thoughts about the matter. Whereas Warhol and Rauschenberg were attracted to the artificial, two-dimensional qualities of the mass media, Rosenquist seemed to take the media at face value. In these pictures, he appears to have succumbed to the media's seductions—the white glint of smiling teeth, the curve of a Ford fender. This show features a number of his more complex canvases, as well as the smoky, glamorous "The Light That Won't Fail, I." Even in his simpler pictures, such as "Untitled (Blue Sky)," the surrealism can be haunting, compounded as it is of late-modernist alienation and a tinge of bomb-shelter anxiety. Through July 11. (Gagosian, 980 Madison Ave., at 76th St.)

**Short List**—**roberto aizenberg,** CDS Gallery, 76 E. 79th St. (open Sundays, noon to 3, through June 30); **suzanne bocanegra,** Munroe, 9 E. 84th St. (opens at noon Wednesdays through Saturdays, through July 3); **barbara schwartz,** Hirschl & Adler Modern, 851 Madison Ave., at 70th St. (open Mondays, closed Saturdays, through June 19); **david smith,** Knoedler, 19 E. 70th St. (open Mondays, closed Saturdays, through June 27); **richard smith,** Feigen, 49 E. 68th St. (open Mondays, through July 20).

### GALLERIES—57th STREET AREA

**Short List**—**george bellows,** Sheehan, 41 E. 57th St. (open Mondays, closed Saturdays, through June 26); **ron janowich** and **frederic thursz,** Galerie Lelong, 20 W. 57th St. (through July 31); **cynthia knott,** De Nagy, 41 W. 57th St. (through June 27).

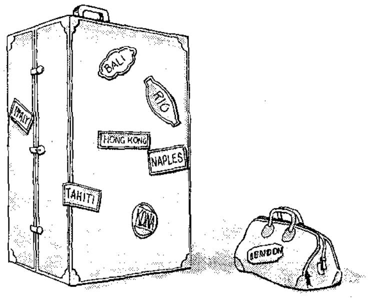
### GALLERIES—SoHo

**Lisa Beck** and **Peter Dudek**—Beck's celestial-looking paintings with thin metal cables running through them, and Dudek's handsome freestanding sculptures of sleek curves composed of thin sheets of metal, plastic, and the occasional soiled blanket, make for a captivating environment. Through June 20. (Theodore, 580 Broadway. Open Wednesdays through Saturdays, 10 to 6.)

**Charles Garabedian**—An impressive show featuring two paintings, based on the Iliad, which portray maimed soldiers in fields of an oddly uplifting yellow-green. Both have been executed with Garabedian's deliberately awkward classicism and, in their scope, suggest Picasso's "Guernica." The most striking of the two looks like some kind of geophysical catastrophe, with land and water merging into a single mass. Although the paintings depict such grotesque things as bloody limbs and the occasional stake through a heart or neck, the figures all have the solidity of classical statuary. Also on display are numerous smaller studies, which are quite compelling on their own. Through July 10. (Louver, 130 Prince St.)

**Peter Halley**—The evolution of Halley's painting style has been so programmatic that it reminds one of the electronics and automobile industries, with new models released at strategic intervals calculated to make consumers feel the need to buy them to keep their stylish lives up-to-date. It's not that

QUEEN ELIZABETH 2
1993 WORLD CRUISES



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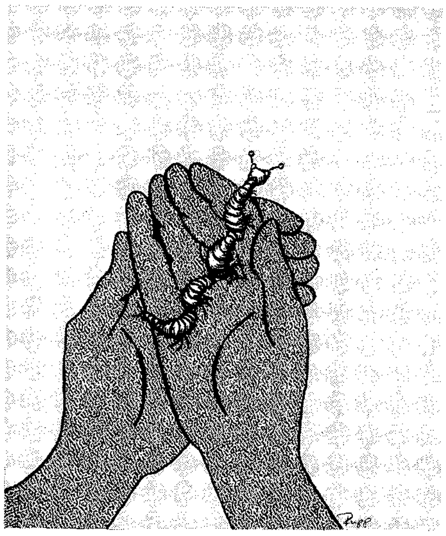
this approach hasn't resulted in some strong paintings—many of his earlier works are comforting in their formal dependability, like those of the sixties Frank Stella, an artist whose development Halley seems to emulate. Halley, though, has evidently come to view production as an end in itself—he has got carried away with Warhol's supposed ideal of becoming an art machine—and, as this show amply demonstrates, pure production is no big feat. Through June 27. (Gagosian, 136 Wooster St.)

**John Lindell**—Lindell had an impressive group of shows a season ago involving issues of homosexuality and AIDS. Now he is having some difficulty carrying his memorial work any further. The current show centers on a group of gay-porn texts drawn in stencil form on the walls. The method of presentation seems to have been appropriated from Jenny Holzer's sarcophagi, though Lindell has used it for his own ends: the texts unexpectedly read from bottom to top, with the end, or top, of the text nearly dissolving into a shimmer. A huge white flag made of wedding-gown material and dragging on the floor, while evocative of thoughts of peace, surrender, and humble memorialization, doesn't quite succeed. More to the point is a modest series of collages made of porn-text fragments attached to postcards of the Taj Mahal. They are the simplest works, yet by invoking the most sublime memorial of all they are also the most potent. Through June 27. (Cugliani, 40 Wooster St.)

**Irina Nakhova**—Large paintings of eyes, and small, wall-mounted sculptures of torsos with an occasional foot or shoe appropriately situated on the floor. The torsos, which have been embedded, variously, with putti, straws, and a pot of eggs, are the more ingratiating works, while the eyes, which are grisaille with colored accents, are richer, less illustrational, more mysterious. Through July 31. (Kind, 136 Greene St.)

**"Sculpture"**—Mostly by painters. All of it is figurative, most of it phallic. One of the most arresting works is an above-the-knees mold of a man by Juan Muñoz, the one painter here who makes *sculpture regularly*. Sandro Chia, Mimmo Paladino, and Donald Baechler have added nothing to the genre of three-dimensional art, but Aldo Mondino's chocolate, tusk-shaped leaning tower of elephants is amusing; Julian Schnabel's sculpture of weathered wood cylinders on top of a stone-like amalgam of resin, sand, and graphite has a sensitive yet tough Noguchi presence; and Ray Smith's witty post-Picasso totem is enjoyable to look at. Bruce Nauman's grouping of four pairs of bronze heads stuck together may be an overly familiar image, but it is also the most satisfying sculpture in the show. Through June 27. (Sperone Westwater, 121 Greene St.)

**Group Shows**—At **A/D**, 560 Broadway: Roy Lichtenstein's wallpaper with a living-room image is as lustreless as his recent paintings. But Gerhard Richter's colorfully gridded wall-to-wall carpeting, which is recognizably related to the artist's past work, would do any rec room proud. On the carpet sit four of Donald Judd's gorgeous plywood chairs, which are stained in crisp aniline colors and have the design simplicity of Shaker furniture. Through July 31. . . . **Klagsbrun**, 51 Greene St.: This exhibition is structured along a novel line: each of the three artists has a variation of the same first name. There is another link as well—all give a sense of what young feminists are thinking. By and large, the works are high on political correctness and low on aesthetic, intellectual, and emotional challenge: the basic political issues addressed here are the same ones that were dealt with by the feminist art of some twenty years ago, which, granted, may be part of the point. The most visible artist here, Christine Lidrbauch, is also the most trite. Her wallpaper gridded in menstrual blood and photographs of herself strapping on a dildo are thoroughly clichéd. Kirsten Mosher, whose photo-and-fur piece, "Beaver Hide Surveillance Mirror," is also trying to reinvent feminism, but without any sense of historical consciousness. Kristin Oppenheim, the daughter and former art prop of Dennis, is the artist who delivers. Her sound piece, "Cry Me a River," is affecting for its simple portrayal of deadened anguish. She also has a knack for object-making. Her glass grenades suggest the kind of fetishistic themes that have previously been the territory of that other pioneering woman artist named Oppenheim—Meret. Through June 27. . . . **Steingladstone**, 99 Wooster St.: Nancy Rubins' sculpture "Drawings and Hot Water Heaters" is composed of just that: junked water heaters and several graphite drawings on big sheets of paper. Like similar earlier works ("Four Thousand Pounds of Smashed and Filleted Airplanes"), it falls somewhere between improvised installation and constructed sculpture—between, say, Allan Kaprow and John Chamberlain. What's impressive about these works, apart from their physical energy and mechanical ingenuity, is their highly evolved definition—they have real, articulated shapes, and an appeal beyond the charm of rusting parts. What Rubins can do with illusions of weight and density is especially evident here. The drawings, strewn over the top of this piece, appear from certain angles to be the heaviest elements around. Rubins shares the gallery with Matthew Barney—here represented by a videotape and a wall relief, in his Cronenbergian "Dead Ringers" mode—and with a young painter named Sam Reveles, who has contributed two pretty, highly refined monochromatic abstractions. But there's no question who steals this show. Through July 31.



*Self-portrait by Christy Rupp*

**Short List**—**Christopher Brown**, Thorp, 103 Prince St. (through June 20); **Fred Fehlau**, Nordanstad-Skarstedt, 49 Greene St. (through June 20); **Dan Flavin**, RubinSpangle, 395 West Broadway (opens at noon on Saturdays, through June 26); **Guercino**, The Drawing Center, 35 Wooster St. (open Wednesday evenings until 8, through Aug. 1); **William Katavolos and Yigal Ozeri**, Bitter-Larkin, 597 Broadway (through June 30); **Alfred Leslie**, Flynn, 113 Crosby St. (through June 27); **Jill Levine**, Fiction-Nonfiction, 21 Mercer St. (through June 27); **Judy Pfaff**, Protetch, 560 Broadway (through June 27); **Hung Liu**, Steinbaum, 132 Greene St. (through June 27); **Markus Oehlen**, Nolan, 560 Broadway (through June 26); **Adam Rolston**, Fawbush, 76 Grand St. (through July 3); **Edwin Ruda**, Kelly, 591 Broadway (open Wednesday evenings until 8, through June 23); **Christy Rupp**, P.P.O.W, 532 Broadway (through June 27); **Julian Schnabel**, Pace, 142 Greene St. (through June 26); **Masami Teraoka**, Auchincloss, 558 Broadway (through June 24).

## OTHER GALLERIES

**"Metamorphose"**—This show includes small works from the mid-thirties to the mid-fifties by British artists, all of them rendered in a feverish, Surrealist style. Famous figures like Henry Moore and Graham Sutherland are represented, but most of the artists are little known. Steven Sykes, who was born in 1914 and is still living, is the one whom this gallery, quite tellingly, considers to be its find. In his ink-and-watercolor "Untitled (Anthropomorphic Moonscape)," a crescent moon looms out of a red-tinted sky over a craggy landscape of bewitched and dancing vegetation. Through June 20. (Galllozzi, 203 W. Houston St. Open Thursdays through Saturdays, 1 to 6.)

# PHOTOGRAPHY

Once again, Virginia Zabriskie's gallery (724 Fifth Avenue, at 57th Street) is home to an out-of-the-ordinary photography show. What's nice about Zabriskie is its tradition of presenting photography in many different ways—and of trying to broaden the usual approach to the medium. "Multiple Exposure: The Group Portrait in Photography," organized by Leslie Tonkonow, the gallery's director, and on view until June 27, is conceptually challenging and visually stimulating. Eclectic in content, sweeping in coverage (the earliest photographs go back to about 1910, and the latest are from 1991), this display of images of groups, by well-known photographers, like Lewis Hine and Nicholas Nixon, as well as by a few lesser-known people, is a chance to exercise your skills at social observation and an impetus to think about certain aspects of the history of photography. A didactic show, it is just the kind of collection of images that thrilled us when we were first discovering the fascination of photography—in fact, this show's first venue was the Ezra and Cecile Zilkha Gallery, at Wesleyan University, last winter. But you don't have to be a student to find the pictures here fine examples of photography's parity with philosophy, history, or literature as a useful way of understanding the world.

All of us have had the experience of being photographed in a group, and such photographs are endlessly enthralling. So, too, are these photographs—a group of *Life* magazine photographers by Robert Johnson, a group of Protestant missionaries by August Sander—even though they are not fragments of our own personal history. What both kinds of group portraits give us is a view of our collective culture that reflects how tribal we all are.

**Sally Mann**—A selection from "Immediate Family," the artist's most recent series of photographs of her children. A number of these pictures have an edge of sensuality, and even eroticism, to them. Mann will sometimes go back and re-create with her kids a scene that, in the course of their daily lives, has presented itself as a potential photograph. Her pictures have qualities—of simultaneous consciousness and unconsciousness, the casual and the staged—that make them spellbinding. Through June 27. (Houk Friedman, 1094 Madison Ave., at 82nd St.)

**Short List**—**Bill Brandt** and **Aart Klein**, Lowinsky, 575 Broadway (through July 24); **Bevan Davies**, Sonnabend, 420 West Broadway (through July 31); **André Kertész**, Staley-Wise, 560 Broadway (through June 20); **Helen Levitt**, Metropolitan Museum, Fifth Ave. at 82nd St. (open Tuesdays through Sundays, 9:30 to 5:15, and Friday and Saturday evenings until 8:45; through June 28); **E. Ira Mc Crudden**, Wessel O'Connor, 60 Thomas St. (closed Saturdays, through July 3); **Lorie Novak**, Baum, 588 Broadway (through July 3); **Gary Schneider**, P.P.O.W, 532 Broadway (through June 27); **Lorna Simpson**, Baer, 476 Broome St. (through June 20); **Sandy Skoglund**, Borden, 560 Broadway (through June 19); **Maggie Steber**, Burden, 20 E. 23rd St. (through Aug. 1); **Louis Stettner**, Greenberg, 120 Wooster St. (through July 2); **Jock Sturges**, Cowles, 420 West Broadway (through June 27); **Andy Warhol**, Pace-MacGill, 32 E. 57th St. (open Mondays, except June 15, closed Saturdays, closes at 4 on Fridays, through June 26).

# MUSIC

Charles Burney, the most readable historian of music and manners, caught the gist of Frederick the Great's particular connection to music: "Not contented with being the soul monarch of the lives, fortunes, and business of his subjects, he even prescribes rules to their most innocent pleasures." Frederick loved music, but especially loved being in charge of it; it's a testament to the solid artistic qualities of Carl Heinrich Graun that his reputation stood high for nearly a century in the German world despite his having spent a quarter century composing to order—to precise, musically detailed, often artistically restrictive order—for his monarch.

We've long been interested in Graun because of his oratorio on the death of Christ, which we've read in score but never heard performed. Before the revival of Bach's passion settings, "Der Tod Jesu" was seen as the summit of the German cantata/oratorio tradition; practically all the eighteenth-century German how-to books on composition, choral singing, church music, and so forth take their examples from it. But Graun was primarily a theatre composer for Berlin—and for Frederick, who stipulated the subjects, the aria forms, the style of the overtures; who, like a Broadway producer, sent back unsatisfactory arias for multiple rewrites; who edited and sometimes wrote the librettos himself; who wrote letters from the battlefield concerning the engagement of star singers; and who occasionally even imposed arias of his own composition, which he turned over to the dutiful Graun for orchestration. By all accounts, Frederick's best effort as a librettist was "Montezuma," written in 1755, the year before his victory at the Battle of Prague. Years ago, Joan Sutherland made an impressive record of some excerpts.

The Bach Aria Group's performance of excerpts from "Montezuma" is scheduled for June 20, at SUNY Stony Brook, with Beverly Hoch in the Sutherland role and D'Anna Fortunato as one of the other soloists.

## IN TOWN—OPERA

**Metropolitan Opera, Concert Productions**—The opening of the company's twenty-sixth season of free outdoor concert productions, which will continue, at various locations, through June 27. June 16 (rain date, June 18): "La Bohème," with Maria Spacagna, Elizabeth Holleque, Franco Farina, and Kim Josephson; conducted by Christian Badea. (Great Lawn, Central Park.). . . ¶ June 17 (rain date, June 18): "Il Barbiere di Siviglia," with Ruth Ann Swenson, Michele Farruggia, Mark Oswald, and John Fiorito; Paul Nadler. (Long Meadow Ballfields, Prospect Park, Brooklyn.). . . ¶ June 19 (rain date, June 21): "La Bohème," with Michèle Boucher, Martile Rowland, John Fowler, and Gordon Hawkins; Christian Badea. (Cunningham Park, Queens.). . . ¶ June 20 (rain date, June 21): "Il Barbiere di Siviglia," with Jane Bunnell, Michael Cousins, David Malis, and John Fiorito; Paul Nadler. (Gateway National Recreation Center, Great Kills Park, Staten Island.). . . ¶ June 23 (rain date, June 25): "Il Barbiere di Siviglia," with Ruth Ann Swenson, Michele Farruggia, Mark Oswald, and John Fiorito; Paul Nadler. (Van Cortlandt Park, the Bronx.) (Evenings at 8. For information, call 362-6000.)

**Opera Fisarmonica**—An opera by William Schimmel based on the life of Pietro Deiro, the Italian immigrant who, in 1906, introduced the piano-accordion to American shores. The work will be preceded by "Five Essences" (derived from Prokofiev), which joins with the opera proper to create, as the composer puts it, "a past, present, and future—the accordion's victory—synonymous with the universal 'Pietro.'" Mr. Schimmel provides the accordion music; he will be joined by Micki Goodman, who directed. (Anahid Sofian Studio, 29 W. 15th St. June 20 at 8 and June 21 at 7. For information about tickets, call 876-0827.)

## IN TOWN—ORCHESTRAS AND CHORUSES

**American Symphony Orchestra**—The Macao-born conductor Yondani Butt leads a pair of all-Brahms concerts. June 19 at 8: The "Tragic Overture" and Symphonies No. 2 and No. 4. . . . **Note:** In a pre-concert recital, beginning at 7 and open to ticketholders, cellist Nancy Snider and pianist Haskell Small perform Brahms' E-Minor Cello Sonata, and the Figaro Trio plays his C-Minor Trio. . . . ¶ June 20 at 8: The "Academic Festival Overture" and Symphonies No. 1 and No. 3. . . . **Note:** In a pre-concert recital, beginning at 7 and open to ticketholders, the Figaro Trio (augmented by violist Maria Lambros) performs Brahms' C-Minor Piano Quartet and contralto Jane Struss, violist Katherine Anderson, and pianist Victor Rosenbaum offer the composer's "Two Songs" (Op. 91). (Alice Tully Hall. 875-5050.)

**Cappella Oratoriana**—Dennis Bernard Delaney directs the choir and a period-instrument ensemble in music from (or growing out of) the Roman oratories of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, including selections from Lassus's "Le Lagrime di San Pietro," double-choir motets by Victoria, sacred dialogues by Domenico Mazzocchi, and Charpentier's brief oratorio "Le Reniement de Saint-Pierre." (Oratory Church of St. Boniface, Willoughby and Duffield Sts., Brooklyn. 1-718 875-2096. June 20 at 8.)

**New York City Gay Men's Chorus**—Gary Miller directs the New York première of John Corigliano's "Of Rage and Remembrance," the composer's own vocal recasting of the third movement of his Symphony No. 1. Mezzo-soprano Jane Shaulis will be the soloist. The program also includes works by David Conte and Dean X Johnson, new arrangements of "Three Folksongs" by Britten, and several popular and show tunes. (Carnegie Hall. 247-7800. June 21 at 8.)

## IN TOWN—RECITALS

**Saturday Brass Quintet**—Performing new music for brass by Rorem, Harbison, Anthony Davis, and Benedict Mason. (Washington Square Church, 135 W. 4th St. June 15 at 8. Admission by contribution.)

**Thomas Yehudah Tirino**—Pianist, performing a program that includes sonatas by Mozart (in D Major, K. 576) and Chopin (in B Minor) and two sonatinas by David Diamond. (Weill Recital Hall, at Carnegie Hall. 247-7800. June 16 at 8.)

**Bach Aria Group**—Performing Bach's Sixth "Brandenburg" Concerto and his Cantata No. 106 (the "Actus Tragicus"), as well as arias and instrumental movements that display their roots in Baroque dance forms. The vocalists will include soprano Beverly Hoch, mezzo-soprano D'Anna Fortunato, tenor David Britton, and baritone Robert Honeysucker. (Cathedral of St. John the Divine, Amsterdam Ave. at 112th St. June 17 at 7:30. No tickets necessary.)

**Bargemusic**—Violinist Ik-Hwan Bae and pianist Tong-Il Han perform sonatas by Brahms (in A Major) and Prokofiev (in F Major), as well as Schubert's C-Major Fantasia (D. 934). (Fulton Ferry Landing, Brooklyn. 1-718 624-4061. June 18-19 at 7:30 and June 21 at 4.)

**Mei Duo**—Pianist Hao Huang and violinist Rachel Huang perform twentieth-century American works by Ives (his Sonata No. 4), Cowell, Copland, Ruth Crawford, Ellen Taaffe Zwilich, and William Grant Still. (Merkin Concert Hall, 129 W. 67th St. 362-8719. June 21 at 3.)

**Carillon**—A recital by Peter Langberg, carillonneur of the city of Løgumkloster, Denmark. (Riverside Church, Riverside Dr. at 120th St. June 21 at 3. No tickets necessary.)

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## MUSIC–Cont'd

**Beverly Somach**—The violinist will perform works by Bach (his E-Major Partita), Fauré (his A-Major Sonata), Saint-Saëns, Sarasate, and others; assisted by pianist Susan Kagan. (St. Joseph School Auditorium, 420 E. 87th St. June 21 at 4. Tickets at the door on the afternoon of the concert.)

### OUT OF TOWN

**Cape May Music Festival**—June 17: Improvisations by pianist John Bayless. . . . ¶ June 18: The Lark String Quartet performs works by Schubert, Grieg, and Shostakovich. . . . ¶ June 20: Music for brass quintet, performed by members of the New Jersey Chamber Music Society. . . . ¶ June 21: Pianist Ory Shihor performs works by Schubert, Beethoven, and Schumann . . . . ¶ June 24: The Jim Cullum Jazz Band. (Evenings at 8:30. For information about tickets and locations, call 1-609 884-5404.)

**Bach Aria Festival**—The Bach Aria Group presents music by Bach and his contemporaries. June 19 at 8:30: Vocal chamber music by Bach and Antonio Lotti, a trio sonata by Jan Dismas Zelenka, and an oboe concerto by Johann Adolf Hasse. . . . ¶ June 20 at 8:30: Operatic music by Handel, Hasse, and Carl Heinrich Graun, as well as selections from Bach's secular cantatas (which are about as close as the composer ever got to the prevalent operatic style of his day). (Staller Center for the Arts, University at Stony Brook.). . . NOTE: The ensemble will present a day-long, mostly Bach mini-festival, on June 21, at the Chelsea Center, East Norwich, Nassau County, with concerts beginning at 2. (For information about tickets to all Bach Aria Festival events, call 1-516 632-7239.)

**Opera Festival of New Jersey**—The festival (which was formerly called the "June Opera Festival," but required a new name this year, since it will run until July 18) opens its ninth season with a production of "The Merry Widow," fully staged, and performed in English. (Lawrenceville School, Lawrenceville, N.J. June 20 at 8. For information about tickets, call 1-609 936-1500.)

**Caramoor Music Festival**—Opening concerts of the festival's forty-seventh season, which will run through August 16. June 20 at 8:30: Roberto Abbado conducts the Orchestra of St. Luke's in Mozart's Symphony No. 26 and Violin Concerto No. 2 (the latter featuring Pamela Frank), Bach's D-Minor Keyboard Concerto (with pianist Peter Serkin), and Tchaikovsky's Serenade for Strings. . . . ¶ June 21 at 5:30: Ms. Frank and Mr. Serkin perform sonatas by Bach, Brahms (his Third, in D Minor), and Busoni (his Second), as well as Schoenberg's "Phantasie" (Op. 47). (Katonah, N.Y. For information about tickets, call 1-914 232-1252.)

### JAZZ/POP/ROCK PERSONAL APPEARANCES

**Ringo Starr and His All-Starr Band**—Celebrity journalists can't forgive him for no longer being young, insouciant, adorable, and a Beatle, and can't forgive him for living out the commonplace script of addiction and rehabilitation. But here he is nevertheless, with a not-bad new album, hitting the road and refusing to be merely a nostalgia act. The onstage lineup—Dave Edmunds, Todd Rundgren, Joe Walsh, and Nils Lofgren, among others—resembles one of those motley post-awards-show jams more than it does a real band, but the bandleader himself deserves to be cut endless slack for surviving who he once was, and for trying one more time not to sing out of key. (Radio City Music Hall, Sixth Ave. at 50th St. 247-4777. June 19-20 at 8. . . . ¶ Jones Beach Theatre. *1-516 221-1000. June 23 at 8.)*

**Mel Tormé and Shirley Horn**—If what you have in mind is a fancy, budget-busting dinner-and-night-out date, this is surely the main event of the JVC Jazz Festival. At sixty-six, the suave, versatile, and priceless baritone Mel Tormé continues to amaze as a classical exponent of the American jazz song. Singer and pianist Shirley Horn, another topnotch trouper, will open the show. In 1991, she released "You Won't Forget Me," one of the best jazz albums of the year, and one of the best recordings of her thirty-year career. A night to make the dowager Hall shine. (Carnegie Hall. 247-7800. June 23 at 8.)

**Al Green/BeBe and CeCe Winans/The Staple Singers**—Meadowlands Theatre. 1-201 935-3900. June 17 at 7:30.

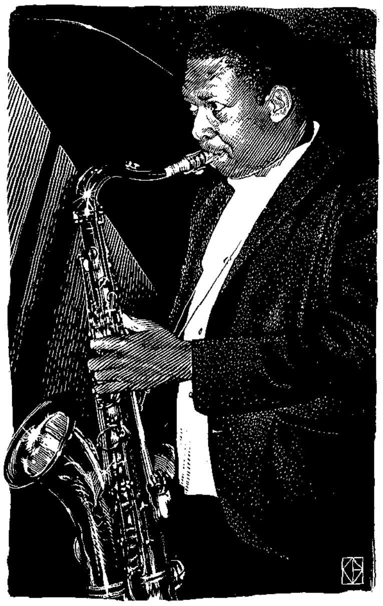
**Father's Day Concert**—Eddie Kendricks, Dennis Edwards, Chuck Jackson, Martha Reeves and the Vandellas, and the Marvelettes. (Apollo Theatre, 253 W. 125th St. 864-0372. June 21 at 5 and 9.)

*New York City Gay Men's Chorus*

**Michel Camilo**—Central Park Zoo, Fifth Ave. at 64th St. June 22 at 7. For information about tickets, call 861-6030.

**Spinal Tap**—Beacon Theatre, Broadway at 74th St. 496-7070. June 23 at 8.

**JVC Jazz Festival**—The annual fiesta, which runs through June 27. June 19 at 8: Dizzy Gillespie's seventy-fifth-birthday celebration (Carnegie Hall). . . . ¶ June 20: At 5:30, Sumi Tonooka (Equitable Auditorium); at 8, the McCoy Tyner trio and Elvin Jones' Jazz Machine in a salute to John Coltrane; hosted by Bill Cosby (Carnegie Hall); at 8, Tito Puente, Arturo Sandoval, and Oscar D'Leon (Avery Fisher Hall); and at 8, Jay Leonhart, Mose Allison, Dave Frishberg, and the New York Society for the Preservation of Illegitimate Music (Equitable Auditorium). . . . ¶ June 21: From 2 to 7, a free concert, with George Coleman, Steve Turre, Phil Woods, and many others (Damrosch Park, Lincoln Center); and at 8, Kenny Barron, Jon Faddis, Doc Cheatham, Roy Hargrove, and more pay tribute to Dizzy G. (Town Hall). . . . ¶ June 22: At 5:30, Dave McKenna (Equitable Auditorium); at 8, Illinois Jacquet and his big band and the Buck Clayton Swing Band (Town Hall); and at 8, David Murray's quartet (Equitable Auditorium). . . . ¶ June 23: At 5:30, Barry Harris (Equitable Auditorium); at 8, Mel Tormé and Shirley Horn (Carnegie Hall); at 8, Lionel Hampton and His Golden Men of Jazz (Avery Fisher Hall); and at 8, Arturo Sandoval, plus the T. S. Monk band (Equitable Auditorium). . . . ¶ June 24: At 5:30, Harold Mabern (Equitable Auditorium); at 7:30, Ruth Brown in a free concert (World Financial Center Plaza, Battery Park City); at 8, the Modern Jazz Quartet, Laurindo Almeida, and Manhattan Transfer (Carnegie Hall); at 8, "A Night of Chesky Records Jazz" (Town Hall); and at 8, a bunch of saxophonists, including Big Nick Nicholas and Bobby Watson (Equitable Auditorium). (The phone number for Carnegie Hall is 247-7800; for Avery Fisher Hall, 875-5030; and for Town Hall, 123 W. 43rd St., 840-2824. For tickets to concerts at the Equitable Auditorium, Seventh Ave at 51st St., call 307-7171.)



*A John Coltrane salute in the JVC Jazz Festival*

## SPORTS

### HOME TEAMS

**Yankees**—Away until June 26, when they meet the Chicago White Sox.

**Mets**—Vs. the Montreal Expos, June 15-17 at 7:40. . . . ¶ Vs. the St. Louis Cardinals, June 18-19 at 7:40, June 20 at 7:10, and June 21 at 1:40. . . . ¶ Vs. the Chicago Cubs, June 22-24 at 7:40 and June 25 at 1:40.

(The Yankees play at Yankee Stadium, 293-6000; and the Mets play at Shea Stadium, 1-718 507-8499.)

### RACING

**Horses**—At Belmont: Daily, except Tuesdays, at 1. . . . At Monmouth Park, Oceanport, N.J.: Weekdays, except Mondays and Thursdays, at 1:05. . . . At Atlantic City Race Course: Tuesdays through Saturdays at 7:25. . . . TROTTING at Yonkers Raceway: Mondays through Saturdays at 8 and Tuesdays at 1; Sundays at 6:15. . . . At the Meadowlands: Weeknights at 7:30. . . . At Saratoga Raceway, Saratoga Springs: Tuesdays through Saturdays at 7:45.

## ABOVE AND BEYOND

**Mermaid Parade**—This extremely silly annual event has, in past years, included representatives of the Coney Island Hysterical Society, not to mention the obligatory mermaids and King Neptunes. Afterward, stick around the boardwalk for performances, starting at about 4, by the Urban Bush Women, Sun Ra and His Arkestra, and others. It's a breezy spot on a steamy Saturday afternoon. (Steeplechase Park, Coney Island. June 20 at 2.)

**Dear Old Dad**—A limited number of women may enroll in a workshop that will take place on Father's Day (June 21) and will illuminate their fathers' characters—and by extension their relationships with them—through handwriting analysis. Bring along a letter or a postcard from Dad, and find out whether he remembers to cross his "t"s and dot his "i"s. (Y.W.C.A., 610 Lexington Ave., at 53rd St. For more information, call 755-4500.)

**Talk**—Evan Cornog discusses how New York's City Hall reflects the character and aspirations of the city that built it. (New-York Historical Society, 170 Central Park W., at 77th St. 873-3400. June 18 at 6:30.)

**Readings**—June 17 at 8:15: Daniel Stern reads from his own fiction. (Barnard Hall, Barnard College, Broadway at 117th St. No tickets necessary.). . . ¶ June 18 at 6:30: Anna Shapiro reads from her new novel. (Rizzoli, 454 West Broadway. No tickets necessary.). . . ¶ June 18 at 7: Jay McInerney reads from his new novel. (Brentano's, Fifth Ave. at 48th St. No tickets necessary.). . . ¶ June 23 at 8:15: Nicholas Christopher and Molly Peacock read from their own poetry. (Barnard Hall, Barnard College, Broadway at 117th St. No tickets necessary.)

**Walks**—June 20 at 1: A stroll through the West Village, sponsored by Citywalks. For reservations, call 989-2456. . . . ¶ June 20 at 1: A walk through Hoboken, sponsored by Adventure on a Shoestring. For reservations, call 265-2663. . . . ¶ June 21 at 11: A jaunt through Bay Ridge, also known as "little Beverly Hills." Sponsored by the Brooklyn Historical Society. For reservations, call 1-718 624-0890.

**Memorandum**—Summer begins on June 20, at 10:14 P.M.

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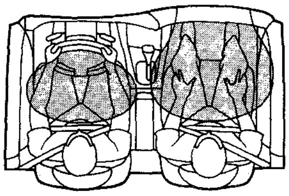

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# GOINGS ON ABOUT TOWN

## THE MOVIE HOUSES

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|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
|  | 15 | 16 | 17 | 18 | 19 | 20 |
| 21 | 22 | 23 | 24 |  |  |  |

FILMS ACCOMPANIED BY A DAGGER ARE DESCRIBED IN THE "IN BRIEF" SECTION, STARTING ON PAGE 20.

### EAST SIDE

**ANGELIKA FILM CENTER,** 18 W. Houston St. (995-2000)

Theatre 1: "Pepi, Luci, Bom" (1980, directed by Pedro Almodóvar; in Spanish), with Carmen Maura.

Theatre 2: "Mediterraneo" (Gabriele Salvatores, in Italian).

Theatre 3: "The Waterdance" (†).

Theatre 4: "Zentropa" (Lars Von Trier, in English and German), with Jean-Marc Barr, Barbara Sukowa, and Eddie Constantine.

Theatre 5: "Night on Earth" (†).

Theatre 6: "Delicatessen" (Jean-Pierre Jeunet and Marc Caro, in French).

**LITTLE THEATRE,** Public Theatre, 425 Lafayette St. (598-7171)

"Cousin Bobby" (†).

**NEWMAN THEATRE,** Public Theatre, 425 Lafayette St. (598-7171)

Through June 18: "The Enchantment" (1989, Shunichi Nagasaki; in Japanese), with Masao Kusakari, Kumiko Akiyoshi, and Kiwako Harada; and "Effi Briest" (1974, Rainer Werner Fassbinder; in German), with Hanna Schygulla and Wolfgang Schenck.

From June 19: "Chimes at Midnight" ("Falstaff"; 1967, Orson Welles), with Welles, Jeanne Moreau, Margaret Rutherford, John Gielgud, Marina Vlady, Alan Webb, Walter Chiari, and Keith Baxter.

**MOVIELAND 8TH STREET TRIPLEX,** 36 E. 8th. (477-6600)

Theatre 1: "Lethal Weapon 3" (†).

Theatre 2: "Basic Instinct" (†).

Theatre 3: "Class Act" (†).

**LOEWS VILLAGE THEATRE VII,** 3rd Ave. at 11th. (982-0400)

Theatre 1: "Patriot Games" (†).

Theatre 2: "Thunderheart" (Michael Apted), with Val Kilmer, Sam Shepard, Graham Greene, and Fred Ward.

Theatre 3: Through June 18: "Poison Ivy" (Katt Shea Ruben), with Tom Skerritt, Sara Gilbert, Cheryl Ladd, and Drew Barrymore. From June 19: "Batman Returns" (Tim Burton), with Michael Keaton, Danny DeVito, Michelle Pfeiffer, and Christopher Walken.

Theatre 4: "Aces: Iron Eagle III" (John Glen), with Louis Gossett, Jr.

Theatre 5: "Patriot Games" (†).

Theatre 6: "Deep Cover" (†).

Theatre 7: (Separate admissions) "Incident at Oglala" (†); and "American Dream" (†).

**CINEMA VILLAGE 12TH STREET,** 22 E. 12th. (924-3363)

Through June 23: "The Good Woman of Bangkok" (Dennis O'Rourke).

From June 24: "L'Elegant Criminel" (Francis Girod, in French), with Daniel Auteuil.

**VILLAGE EAST CINEMAS,** 2nd Ave. at 12th. (529-6799)

Theatre 1: "Toto le Heros" (Jaco Van Dormael; in French), with Michel Bouquet.

Theatre 2: "Beautiful Dreamers" (John Kent Harrison), with Rip Torn.

Theatre 3: "Daughters of the Dust" (1991, Julie Dash).

Theatre 4: "Cabeza de Vaca" (Nicolas Echevarria; in Spanish).

Theatre 5: "Lovers" (Vicente Aranda, in Spanish).

Theatre 6: "Sister Act" (†).

Theatre 7: "Encino Man" (Les Mayfield), with Sean Astin.

**CINEMA VILLAGE 3RD AVENUE,** between 12th and 13th. (505-7320)

"The Fourth Animation Celebration: The Movie."

**LOEWS 19TH STREET EAST 6,** B'way at 19th. (260-8000)

Theatre 1: "Basic Instinct" (†).

Theatre 2: "Lethal Weapon 3" (†).

Theatre 3: "White Sands" (Roger Donaldson), with Willem Dafoe, Mary Elizabeth Mastrantonio, and Mickey Rourke.

Theatre 4: "Basic Instinct" (†).

Theatre 5: "Lethal Weapon 3" (†).

Theatre 6: "Class Act" (†).

**GRAMERCY,** Lexington at 23rd. (475-1660)

"The Playboys" (†).

**BAY CINEMA,** 2nd Ave. at 32nd. (679-0160)

"Alien$^3$" (†).

**MURRAY HILL CINEMAS,** 160 E. 34th. (689-6548)

Theatre 1: "Sister Act" (†).

Theatre 2: "White Men Can't Jump" (Ron Shelton), with Wesley Snipes and Woody Harrelson.

Theatre 3: "Far and Away" (†).

Theatre 4: "Sister Act" (†).

**LOEWS 34TH STREET SHOWPLACE,** 238 E. 34th. (532-5544)

Theatre 1: "Lethal Weapon 3" (†).

Theatre 2: "Patriot Games" (†).

Theatre 3: Through June 18: "Patriot Games" (†). From June 19: "Batman Returns" (Tim Burton), with Michael Keaton, Danny DeVito, and Michelle Pfeiffer.

**34TH ST. EAST,** 241 E. 34th. (683-0255)

"Housesitter" (Frank Oz), with Steve Martin, Goldie Hawn, Dana Delany, Julie Harris, Donald Moffat, and Peter MacNicol.

**EASTSIDE CINEMA,** 3rd Ave. at 55th. (755-3020)

"The Mambo Kings" (Arne Glimcher), with Armand Assante, Antonio Banderas, and Cathy Moriarty.

**SUTTON I AND 2,** 3rd Ave. at 57th. (759-1411)

Theatre 1: "Lovers" (Vicente Aranda, in Spanish).

Theatre 2: "Encino Man" (Les Mayfield), with Sean Astin.

**CROWN GOTHAM,** 3rd Ave. at 58th. (759-2262)

"My Cousin Vinny" (†).

**PLAZA,** 42 E. 58th. (355-3320)

"A Midnight Clear" (†).

**MANHATTAN TWIN,** 3rd Ave. at 59th. (935-6420)

Theatre 1: "Class Act" (†).

Theatre 2: "Class Act" (†).

**59TH STREET EAST CINEMA,** 239 E. 59th. (759-4630)

"Deep Cover" (†).

**BARONET AND CORONET,** 3rd Ave. at 59th. (355-1663)

Theatre 1: "Far and Away" (†).

Theatre 2: "Housesitter" (Frank Oz), with Steve Martin and Goldie Hawn.

**CINEMA I, CINEMA II, AND CINEMA 3RD AVENUE,** 3rd Ave. at 60th. (753-6022)

Theatre 1: "Sister Act" (†).

Theatre 2: "For Sasha" (Alexandre Arcady, in French), with Sophie Marceau and Richard Berry.

Theatre 3: "The Playboys" (†).

**ART EAST CINEMA,** 1st Ave. at 61st. (644-1111)

"Delicatessen" (Jean-Pierre Jeunet and Marc Caro, in French).

**FIRST & 62ND CINEMAS,** 400 E. 62nd. (752-4600)

Theatre 1: (Matinées only) "Beethoven" (Brian Levant), with Charles Grodin; and (evenings only) "Poison Ivy" (Katt Shea Ruben), with Tom Skerritt, Sara Gilbert, Cheryl Ladd, and Drew Barrymore.

Theatre 2: "Alien$^3$" (†).

Theatre 3: "Alien$^3$" (†).

Theatre 4: "Aces: Iron Eagle III" (John Glen), with Louis Gossett, Jr.

Theatre 5: "The Waterdance" (†).

Theatre 6: "Alien$^3$" (†).

**GEMINI I AND 2,** 2nd Ave. at 64th. (832-1670)

Theatre 1: Through June 18: "Wayne's World" (Penelope Spheeris), with Mike Myers and Dana Carvey. From June 19: "Batman Returns" (Tim Burton), with Michael Keaton, Danny DeVito, and Michelle Pfeiffer.

Theatre 2: Through June 18: "Basic Instinct" (†). From June 19: "Batman Returns."

**BEEKMAN,** 2nd Ave. at 66th. (737-2622)

"The Player" (†).

**LOEWS NEW YORK TWIN,** 2nd Ave. at 67th. (744-7339)

Theatre 1: "Lethal Weapon 3" (†).

Theatre 2: "Patriot Games" (†).

**68TH ST. PLAYHOUSE,** 3rd Ave. at 68th. (734-0302)

"Mediterraneo" (Gabriele Salvatores, in Italian).

**LOEWS TOWER EAST,** 3rd Ave. at 71st. (879-1313)

"Beautiful Dreamers" (John Kent Harrison), with Rip Torn.

**U. A. EAST,** 1st Ave. at 85th. (249-5100)

"Patriot Games" (†).

**PARK & 86TH STREET CINEMAS,** 125 E. 86th. (534-1880)

Theatre 1: "Housesitter" (Frank Oz), with Steve Martin and Goldie Hawn.

Theatre 2: "Far and Away" (†).

**LOEWS ORPHEUM VII,** 3rd Ave. at 86th. (876-2400)

Theatre 1: "Lethal Weapon 3" (†).

Theatre 2: "Lethal Weapon 3" (†).

Theatre 3: "Basic Instinct" (†).

Theatre 4: "Aces: Iron Eagle III" (John Glen), with Louis Gossett, Jr.

Theatre 5: "Casablanca" (1942, Michael Curtiz), with Humphrey Bogart, Ingrid Bergman, Claude Rains, Paul Henreid, Conrad Veidt, Sydney Greenstreet, and Peter Lorre.

Theatre 6: "Class Act" (†).

Theatre 7: Through June 18: (Matinées only) "FernGully . . . The Last Rainforest" (Bill Kroyer), an animated film; and (evening[illegible] only) "Thunderheart" (Michael Apted), wit[illegible] Val Kilmer, Sam Shepard, Graham Greene, and Fred Ward. From June 19: "Batman Returns" (Tim Burton), with Michael Keaton, Danny DeVito, and Michelle Pfeiffer.

**86TH STREET EAST TWIN,** 3rd Ave. at 86th. (249-1144)

Theatre 1: "Encino Man" (Les Mayfield), with Sean Astin.

Theatre 2: "Sister Act" (†).

### WEST SIDE

**FILM FORUM,** 209 W. Houston St. (727-8110)

Theatre 1: Through June 16: "Wisecracks" (†). From June 17: "The Inland Sea" (directed by Lucille Carra; in English and Japanese) and "Unknown Soldiers" (Veronika Soul; in English and Japanese ).

Theatre 2: See listings under Revival Houses.

Theatre 3: Through June 16: "Once Upon a Time in China" (Tsui Hark; in Cantonese, with Chinese and English subtitles). From June 17: "Wisecracks" (†).

**WAVERLY I AND 2,** 6th Ave. at 3rd. (929-8037)

Theatre 1: "Alien$^3$" (†).

Theatre 2: "Housesitter" (Frank Oz), with Steve Martin and Goldie Hawn.

**ART GREENWICH TWIN,** Greenwich Ave. at 12th. (929-3350)

Theatre 1: "The Player" (†).

Theatre 2: "Far and Away" (†).

**QUAD CINEMA,** 34 W. 13th. (255-8800)

Theatre 1: Through June 18: "A Midnight Clear" (†). From June 19: "Life on the Edge" (Andrew Yates), with Jeff Perry, Jennifer Holmes, Andrew Prine, and Greta Blackburn.

Theatre 2: "Raise the Red Lantern" (Zhang Yimou; in Chinese).

Theatre 3: "Europa Europa" (Agnieszka Holland, in German and Russian).

Theatre 4: Through June 18: "Proof" (Jocelyn Moorhouse), with Hugo Weaving, Genevieve Picot, and Russell Crowe. From June 19: "Adam's Rib" (†).

**CHELSEA CINEMAS,** 260 W. 23rd. (691-4744)

Theatre 1: "Far and Away" (†).

Theatre 2: "Patriot Games" (†).

Theatre 3: "Sister Act" (†).

Theatre 4: "Alien$^3$" (†).

Theatre 5: Through June 18: "Alien$^3$" (†). From June 19: "Batman Returns" (Tim Burton), with Michael Keaton, Danny DeVito, and Michelle Pfeiffer.

Theatre 6: "The Player" (†).

Theatre 7: "Housesitter" (Frank Oz), with Steve Martin and Goldie Hawn.

Theatre 8: "Housesitter."

Theatre 9: "Patriot Games" (†).

**23RD ST. WEST TRIPLEX,** 333 W. 23rd. (989-0060)

Theatre 1: "Encino Man" (Les Mayfield), with Sean Astin.

Theatre 2: "My Cousin Vinny" (†).

Theatre 3: "Aces: Iron Eagle III" (John Glen), with Louis Gossett, Jr.

**GUILD,** 33 W. 50th. (757-2406)

"Sister Act" (†).

**WORLDWIDE CINEMAS,** 50th St. between 8th and 9th Aves. (246-1583)

Theatre 1: "My Cousin Vinny" (†).

Theatre 2: "Poison Ivy" (Katt Shea Ruben), with Tom Skerritt, Sara Gilbert, Cheryl Ladd, and Drew Barrymore.

Theatre 3: "Housesitter" (Frank Oz), with Steve Martin, Goldie Hawn, Dana Delany, Julie Harris, Donald Moffat, and Peter MacNicol.

Theatre 4: "A Midnight Clear" (†).

Theatre 5: "Where Angels Fear to Tread" (Charles Sturridge), with Helena Bonham Carter, Judy Davis, Rupert Graves, Giovanni Guidelli, Barbara Jefford, and Helen Mirren.

Theatre 6: "The Player" (†).

**Ziegfeld,** 141 W. 54th. (765-7600)
"Far and Away" (†).

**Loews Festival,** 6 W. 57th. (307-7856)
"Fried Green Tomatoes" (Jon Avnet).

**57th St. Playhouse,** 110 W. 57th. (581-7360)
"Zentropa" (Lars Von Trier, in English and German), with Jean-Marc Barr, Barbara Sukowa, and Eddie Constantine.

**Carnegie Hall Cinemas,** 7th Ave. between 56th and 57th. (265-2520)
Theatre 1: "Delicatessen" (Jean-Pierre Jeunet and Marc Caro, in French).
Theatre 2: "Mississippi Masala" (Mira Nair), with Denzel Washington and Sarita Choudhury.

**Loews Fine Arts,** 4 W. 58th. (980-5656)
"Howards End" (†).

**Cinema 3,** 2 W. 59th. (752-5959)
"Proof" (Jocelyn Moorhouse), with Hugo Weaving, Genevieve Picot, and Russell Crowe.

**Loews Columbus Circle,** B'way at 61st. (247-5070)
"Encino Man" (Les Mayfield), with Sean Astin, Brendan Fraser, and Megan Ward.

**62nd & Broadway,** 62 W. 62nd. (265-7466)
"Night on Earth" (†).

**Lincoln Plaza 1, 2, and 3,** B'way at 63rd. (757-2280)
Theatre 1: "The Adjuster" (Atom Egoyan).
Theatre 2: Through June 18: "Adam's Rib" (†). From June 19: "The Hairdresser's Husband" (Patrice Leconte, in French), with Jean Rochefort and Anna Galiena.
Theatre 3: "Monster in a Box" (Nick Broomfield), with Spalding Gray.

**Regency,** B'way at 67th. (724-3700)
"Far and Away" (†).

**Loews 84th Street Sixplex,** B'way at 84th. (877-3600)
Theatre 1: "Patriot Games" (†).
Theatre 2: "Lethal Weapon 3" (†).
Theatre 3: "Class Act" (†).
Theatre 4: "Sister Act" (†).
Theatre 5: "The Player" (†).
Theatre 6: Through June 18: "Patriot Games" (†). From June 19: "Batman Returns" (Tim Burton), with Michael Keaton, Danny DeVito, and Michelle Pfeiffer.

**Metro Cinema 1 and 2,** B'way at 99th. (222-1200)
Theatre 1: "Alien$^3$" (†).
Theatre 2: "Housesitter" (Frank Oz), with Steve Martin, Goldie Hawn, Dana Delany, Julie Harris, Donald Moffat, and Peter MacNicol.

**Olympia I and II,** B'way at 107th. (865-8128)
Theatre 1: "Basic Instinct" (†).
Theatre 2: "Aces: Iron Eagle III" (John Glen), with Louis Gossett, Jr.

## TIMES SQUARE AREA

**Criterion Center,** B'way at 44th. (354-0900)
Theatre 1: "Alien$^3$" (†).
Theatre 2: "Alien$^3$" (†).
Theatre 3: "Alien$^3$" (†).
Theatre 4: Through June 18: "Basic Instinct" (†). From June 19: "Batman Returns" (directed by Tim Burton), with Michael Keaton, Danny DeVito, and Michelle Pfeiffer.
Theatre 5: Through June 18: "Deep Cover" (†). From June 19: "Batman Returns."
Theatre 6: "Lethal Weapon 3" (†).
Theatre 7: "Lethal Weapon 3" (†).

**Embassy 1,** B'way at 46th. (302-0494)
"Sister Act" (†).

**Embassy 2, 3, and 4,** 7th Ave. at 47th. (730-7262)
Theatre 1: "Aces: Iron Eagle III" (John Glen), with Louis Gossett, Jr.
Theatre 2: "Wayne's World" (Penelope Spheeris), with Mike Myers and Dana Carvey.
Theatre 3: "Beauty and the Beast" (Gary Trousdale and Kirk Wise ), a Walt Disney animated film.

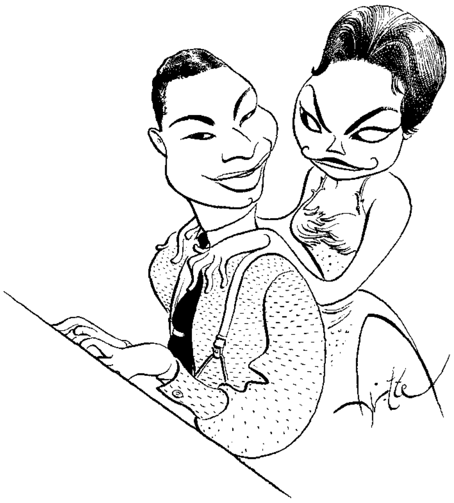
**Loews Astor Plaza,** 44th St. at B'way. (869-8340)
"Patriot Games" (†).

**National Twin,** B'way at 44th. (869-0950)
Theatre 1: "Class Act" (†).
Theatre 2: "Housesitter" (Frank Oz), with Steve Martin, Goldie Hawn, Dana Delany, Julie Harris, Donald Moffat, and Peter MacNicol.

## REVIVAL HOUSES

**Le Cinematographe,** 15 Vandam St. (675-4680)
Through June 18: "Lost Prophet"; and "Paris Is Burning" (1991, directed by Jennie Livingston), a documentary.
From June 19: A program of films by Pedro Almodóvar.

**8th St. Playhouse,** 52 W. 8th. (674-6515)
Through June 16: "My Own Private Idaho" (1991, Gus Van Sant), with River Phoenix, Keanu Reeves, James Russo, and William Richert; and "Mala Noche" (1986, Van Sant).
June 17-18: "High Heels" (1992, Pedro Almodóvar; in Spanish); and "Women on the Verge of a Nervous Breakdown" (1988, Almodóvar; in Spanish), with Carmen Maura, Fernando Guillén, Julieta Serrano, and Kiti Manver.
June 19-20: "King of Hearts" (1967, Philippe de Broca; in French and English), with Alan Bates and Geneviève Bujold; and "Marat/Sade" (1967, Peter Brook), performed by the Royal Shakespeare Company.
June 21-23: "Death in Venice" (1971, Luchino Visconti), with Dirk Bogarde and Bjorn Andresen; and "The Damned" (1969, Visconti), with Bogarde, Ingrid Thulin, and Helmut Berger.



*At Film Forum 2,*
*Nat King Cole and Eartha Kitt in*
*"St. Louis Blues"*

From June 24: "Chinatown" (1974, Roman Polanski), with Jack Nicholson, Faye Dunaway, and John Huston; and "Sunset Boulevard" (1950, Billy Wilder), with Gloria Swanson, William Holden, and Erich von Stroheim.

**Film Forum 2,** 209 W. Houston St. (727-8110)
June 15: "Sumurun" (1920, Ernst Lubitsch; a German silent film), with Lubitsch; and "The Eyes of the Mummy" (1918, Lubitsch; a German silent film), with Pola Negri and Emil Jannings.
June 16: "Madame DuBarry" (1919, Ernst Lubitsch; a German silent film), with Pola Negri and Emil Jannings; and "Romeo and Juliet in the Snow" (1920, Lubitsch; a German silent film).
June 17: "Carmen" (1918, Ernst Lubitsch; a German silent film), with Pola Negri; and "The Merry Jail" (1917, Lubitsch; a German silent film), with Emil Jannings.
June 18: "Meyer in Berlin" (1919, Ernst Lubitsch; a German silent film); and two short films directed by Lubitsch.
June 19-20: "Texas Tenor: The Illinois Jacquet Story" (1992, Arthur Elgort).
June 21: "C-Jammin' the Blues," with film clips of Ben Webster, Roy Eldridge, Coleman Hawkins, and others; and "An Evening at Birdland," with clips of Art Blakey, Bill Evans, Sarah Vaughan, and others.
June 22: "Sweet Love, Bitter" (1966, Herbert Danska), with Dick Gregory; and "Bird" (†).
June 23: "Mambo Madness" (1955), "A Bailar" (1989), "Machito: A Latin Jazz Legacy" (1985), and "Musicians in Exile" (1990).
June 24: "St. Louis Blues" (1958, Allen Reisner), with Nat King Cole, Eartha Kitt, Pearl Bailey, and Cab Calloway; and film and video clips of appearances by Cole.

**Theatre 80 St. Marks,** 80 St. Marks Pl. (254-7400)
June 15: "La Dolce Vita" (1960, Federico Fellini; in Italian), with Marcello Mastroianni and Anita Ekberg.
June 16: "Macbeth" (1971, Roman Polanski), with Jon Finch; and "Othello" (1965, Stuart Burge), performed by Laurence Olivier and the National Theatre of Great Britain.
June 17: "Foreign Correspondent" (1940, Alfred Hitchcock), with Joel McCrea, Laraine Day, and George Sanders; and "Saboteur" (1942, Hitchcock), with Priscilla Lane, Robert Cummings, and Otto Kruger.
June 18: "This Strange Passion" ("El"; 1952, Luis Buñuel; a Mexican film, in Spanish), with Arturo de Corva; and "Nazarin" (1958, Buñuel; in Spanish), with Francisco Rabal.
June 19-20: "Beauty and the Beast" (1946, Jean Cocteau; in French), with Jean Marais, Josette Day, Marcel André, and Michel Auclair; and "Black Orpheus" (1959, Marcel Camus; a Brazilian film, in Portuguese), with Marpessa Dawn.
June 21: "Victim" (1961, Basil Dearden), with Dirk Bogarde, Sylvia Syms, and Dennis Price; and "Peeping Tom" (1960, Michael Powell), with Karl Boehm and Moira Shearer.
June 22: "Red Desert" (1964, Michelangelo Antonioni; in Italian), with Monica Vitti and Richard Harris; and "Blow-Up" (1966, Antonioni), with Vanessa Redgrave and David Hemmings.
June 23: "Witness" (1985, Peter Weir), with Harrison Ford, Kelly McGillis, and Lukas Haas; and "The Year of Living Dangerously" (†).
June 24: "Indiscretion of an American Wife" (1954, Vittorio De Sica), with Jennifer Jones, Montgomery Clift, Richard Beymer, and Gino Cervi; and "The Gold of Naples" (1957, Vittorio De Sica; in Italian), with Sophia Loren, De Sica, Silvana Magnano, and Totò.

## FILM LIBRARIES, ETC.

**Museum of Modern Art,** Roy and Niuta Titus Theatres, 11 W. 53rd St. (708-9490)—June 15 at 2:30: "White Bird, Black Markings" (1971, directed by Juri Ilyenko; in Ukrainian). . . . ¶ June 15 at 6 and June 19 at 3: "Professor Mamlok" (1938, Adolf Minkin; in Russian). . . . ¶ June 16 and 21 at 2:30: "Ivan the Terrible, Part I" (1944, Sergei Eisenstein; in Russian), with Nikolai Cherkassov. . . . ¶ June 16 at 6 and June 20 at 5: "Chapayev" (1934, Sergei and Georgy Vassiliev; in Russian). . . . ¶ June 18 at 2:30 and June 21 at 5: "Ivan the Terrible, Part II" (1946, Eisenstein; in Russian), with Cherkassov. . . . ¶ June 18 at 3 and 6: "A Wife from My Enemies" (1990, Jan Sedaka), a documentary. . . . ¶ June 18 at 6: "Happiness" (1934, Alexander Medvedkin; a Russian silent film). . . . ¶ June 19 at 2:30 and June 20 at 5: "Open City" (1945, Roberto Rossellini; in Italian), with Anna Magnani. . . . ¶ June 19 at 6 and June 20 at 2: "Battle of the Rails" (1946, René Clément; in French), with Antoine Laurent. . . . ¶ June 20 at 2:30: "Aerograd" (1935, Alexander Dovzhenko; in Russian). . . . ¶ June 21 at 2 and June 22 at 6: "Bird" (†). . . . ¶ June 21 at 5 and June 22 at 2:30: "Mean Streets" (1973, Martin Scorsese), with Robert De Niro, Harvey Keitel, and Amy Robinson. . . . ¶ June 22 at 3: "Ballad of a Soldier" (1959, Grigori Chukhrai; in Russian), with Vladimir Ivashov and Shanna Prokhorenko. . . . ¶ June 22 at 6: "Alexander Nevsky" (1938, Eisenstein; in Russian), with Cherkassov. . . . ¶ June 23 at 2:30: "Los Olvidados" ("The Young and the Damned"; 1950, Luis Buñuel; a Mexican film, in Spanish). . . . ¶ June 23 at 3: "The Childhood of Maxim Gorky" (†). . . . ¶ June 23 at 6: "The 400 Blows" (1959, François Truffaut; in French), with Jean-Pierre Léaud. . . . ¶ June 23 at 6: "Goodbye, Boys" (1966, M. Kalik; in Russian).

**Walter Reade Theatre,** Lincoln Center, 165 W. 65th St., plaza level. (875-5600)—June 15 at 2 and June 16 at 4:30 and 8:45: "Town Alive" (1985, Masato Koike; in Japanese). . . . ¶ June 15 at 3:45 and 8:45 and June 16 at 2: "The Emperor's Naked Army Marches On" (1987, Kazuo Hara; in Japanese). . . . ¶ June 15-16 at 6:15, June 17 at 8:45, and June 18 at 2: "Crows and Sparrows" (1949, Zheng Junil). . . . ¶ June 17 at 2 and 6:30: "A Promise" (1986, Yoshishigue Yoshida; in Japanese). . . . ¶ June 17 at 4:15, June 19 at 4 and 8:15, and June 20 at 6: "Pineapple Tours: An Okinawan Film in Three Stories" (1992, Tsutomu Makiya, Yuji Nakae, and Hayashi Toma). . . . ¶ June 18 at 4:30 and June 20 at 4: "I-Omante" (1977, Tadayoshi Himeda; in Japanese). . . . ¶ June 18 at 6:30 and 9 and June 21 at 2 and 4:30: "The Funeral" (†). . . . ¶ June 19 at 2 and 6:15 and June 20 at 8:30: "A Rough Sketch of a Spiral" (1990,

## MOVIE HOUSES–Cont'd

Yasufumi Kojima; in Japanese). . . . ¶ June 20 at 2: "Charlotte''s Web" (1972, Charles A. Nichols and Iwao Takamoto). . . . ¶ June 21 at 7 and 9:15 and June 22 at 2, 4:15, and 6:30: "Tampopo" (1986, Juzo Itami; in Japanese). . . . ¶ June 22 at 9, June 23 at 2, 4, 6, 8, and 10, and June 24 at 2, 4, and 6: "Winter Kills" (see page 21). . . . ¶ June 24 at 8 and 10: "Satan" (1990, Viktor Aristov; in Russian).

**Florence Gould Hall,** 55 E. 59th St. (355-6160)—June 17 at 12:30, 3:15, 6, and 8:45: "Rapt" (1933, Dimitri Kirsanoff; in French and German), with Dita Parlo, Geymond Vital, Nadia Sibirskaïa, and Lucas Gridoux. . . . ¶ June 24 at 12:30, 3:15, 6, and 8:45: "Overseas" (1990, Brigitte Roüan; in French), with Nicole Garcia, Marianne Basler, Roüan, and Philippe Galland.

**American Museum of the Moving Image,** 35th Ave. at 36th St., Astoria. (1-718 784-0077)—"Burt Lancaster: The Tough Guy." June 20 at 2: "Sweet Smell of Success" (1957, Alexander Mackendrick), with Lancaster and Tony Curtis. . . . ¶ June 20 at 4: "Seven Days in May" (see page 21). . . . ¶ June 21 at 2: "The Crimson Pirate" (†). . . . ¶ June 21 at 4: "The Professionals" (1966, Richard Brooks), with Lancaster, Lee Marvin, Robert Ryan, and Claudia Cardinale.

**Museum of Television and Radio,** 25 W. 52nd St. (621-6800)—"Jim Henson's World of Television." Through June 21: "The Muppet Show: Harry Belafonte" (1979) and "Of Muppets and Men: The Making of The Muppet Show" (1981). . . . From June 23: "Fraggle Rock: Honk of Honks" (1986) and "Down at Fraggle Rock . . . Behind the Scenes" (1987). Showings Tuesdays through Saturdays at 1. . . . ¶ "The Jim Henson Hour: Dog City" (1989) and "The Storyteller: The Soldier and Death" (1989). Showings Saturdays and Sundays at 3:30.

**Donnell Library Center,** 20 W. 53rd St. (621-0619)—June 16 at noon: "The Man Who Envied Woman" (1985, Yvonne Rainer). . . . ¶ June 23 at noon: "Committed" (1984, Shelia McLaughlin and Lynne Tillman).

**Metropolitan Museum of Art,** Fifth Ave. at 82nd St. (570-3949)—June 20 at 3 and 7: "Red Beard" (1965, Akira Kurosawa; in Japanese), with Toshiro Mifune.

**Anthology Film Archives,** 32 Second Ave., at 2nd St. (505-5181)—June 19 at 6:30, June 20 at 7, and June 21 at 3: "Palestinian Diaries—Chronicles of an Occupation" (1990). . . . ¶ June 19 at 8: Two films by Richard Kostelanetz. . . . ¶ June 20 at 3: A program of short films by Sidney Peterson. . . . ¶ June 20 at 9: "The Great Blondino" (1967) and "Bleu Shut" (1970), both by Robert Nelson. . . . ¶ June 21 at 5: "Pulse, reels 19-24" (1980-81, Yasunori Yamamoto). . . . ¶ June 21 at 8: A program of films by Robert Huot.

**Adam Clayton Powell, Jr., State Office Building,** 163 W. 125th St. (873-5040)—June 17 at 6:30: "To Sleep with Anger" (1990, Charles Burnett), with Danny Glover, Mary Alice, and Richard Brooks; and "Straight Out of Brooklyn" (1991, Matty Rich). . . . ¶ June 19 at 6:30: "The F.B.I.'s War on Black America" (1990, Denis Mueller) and "Malcolm X: By Any Means Necessary" (1990). . . . ¶ June 20 at 6:30: "Quilombo" (1984, Carlos Diegues) and "They Came Before Columbus" (1989, Clemson Brown).

# IN BRIEF

SEE ABOVE FOR THEATRE ADDRESSES AND TELEPHONE NUMBERS.
IF A MOVIE HAS BEEN REVIEWED IN "THE CURRENT CINEMA" DURING THE PAST TWO YEARS, THE DATE OF ITS REVIEW IS GIVEN.

*Alexei Lyarsky and Mark Troyanovski in "The Childhood of Maxim Gorky"*

(The following notes are by Pauline Kael, Terrence Rafferty, and Michael Sragow.)

**Adam's Rib**—Single females from three generations of a contemporary Russian family—a bedridden grandmother, a divorced working mother, and her two grown daughters—share an apartment as well as various mental and emotional cramps. Vyacheslav Krishtofovich's look at the small disturbances of woman, taken from the book "House of Young Women," by Anatole Kourtchatkine, is gentler, sweeter, and more nuanced than many Eastern exports. There are times when the characters' rueful resilience makes you smile. But the crises, which include a busted affair and an unplanned pregnancy, never acquire comic-dramatic momentum, not even in a climactic birthday celebration that brings the mother's two ex-husbands and her new boyfriend face to face to face. Krishtofovich has been compared to the British director Mike Leigh, but he lacks Leigh's inspirational spark and explosive revelations of character. At the end of "Adam's Rib," Magic Realism is supposed to mesh with kitchen-sink realism; instead, the two collide. Featuring Inna Churikova as the mother, Svetlana Ryabova and Maria Golubkina as her older and younger daughters, and Elena Bogdanova as the grandmother; cinematography by Pavel Lebedev. (The film bears no relation to the 1949 Tracy-Hepburn comedy.) In Russian.—M.S. (Lincoln Plaza; through June 18. . . . ¶ Quad Cinema; starting June 19.)

**Alien$^3$**—The latest and perhaps the last of the science-fiction horror series that began with "Alien" in 1979. Here, the heroine of the previous films, Ripley (Sigourney Weaver), crash-lands on a godforsaken planet whose population consists of a couple of dozen mean-looking convicts running some sort of dilapidated foundry. She has, unwittingly, brought one of those nasty, dripping, sharp-toothed aliens with her in the spacecraft. The script (by David Giler, Walter Hill, and Larry Ferguson) is designed to keep us asking ourselves the fundamental questions: Who will get eaten by the alien? In what order? Is the next one going to be too grisly to watch? Unfortunately, the director, David Fincher, doesn't seem to have the skill to make even the simplest action sequence coherent, or the patience to give the audience the narrative information it needs. Although he's a gifted image-maker, the images never quite add up. In the long climactic sequence, in which Ripley and the cons try to maneuver the beast through a maze of passageways, Fincher's fractured style becomes maddening: we're trapped in these elaborate sets and have no better idea where we are than the monster does. And our interest expires long before the alien has hissed its last. Also with Charles S. Dutton, Charles Dance, and Lance Henriksen. Cinematography by Alex Thomson.—T.R. (Reviewed in our issue of 6/1/92.) (Bay Cinema, First & 62nd Cinemas, Waverly, Chelsea Cinemas, Metro Cinema, and Criterion Center.)

**American Dream**—Barbara Kopple's documentary, about a strike in a Minnesota meat-packing plant, is a lucid and unfussy piece of movie journalism which manages to be as complexly affecting as a great novel. The story that she tells here is a terrifying one. The workers at the Austin, Minnesota, plant of Geo. A. Hormel & Company decide to go on strike on August 17, 1985, rather than accept a rollback of their wages and benefits. The union, Local P-9 of the United Food and Commercial Workers International Union, is led by a militant president, Jim Guyette, and a fiery free-lance consultant, Ray Rogers. Together, Guyette and Rogers create a terrific spirit of energy and resolve in the rank and file. But Lewie Anderson, a veteran negotiator for the international union, thinks that their strategy is "doomed." As the strike wears on, our reactions to what we're seeing become more volatile. Our hearts are with the pumped-up rank and file of P-9, but our heads, increasingly (and surprisingly), are with the pragmatic Anderson: his analysis of the local's chances against the company proves accurate in virtually every particular. The movie embodies a kind of tragic understanding of American life—tragic in the original and the fullest sense, in which the spectacle of unspeakable calamity produces pity and terror and then an unforeseeable and penetrating clarity. This is a masterpiece of social art. Academy Award for best documentary in 1991.—T.R. (3/23/92) (Loews Village Theatre VII.)

**Basic Instinct**—A vicious, grindingly manipulative urban mystery that uses a thick atmosphere of S & M kinkiness to distract the audience from the story's thinness and inanity. Michael Douglas plays a cop with a "dark side." Sharon Stone plays a rich, beautiful bisexual novelist who is the prime suspect in a murder case. He falls in love with her, and the two of them breathe heavily through the rest of the picture. Stone has a few bright moments early on. But our basic instinct as we watch Douglas's strenuous grimaces of sexual transport is to flee the theatre. And the mystery is so ineptly constructed that it's not much fun trying to work out the solution. We sense that the screenwriter, Joe Eszterhas, and the director, Paul Verhoeven, don't have any respect for the genre—that they're too jaded to care about anything but giving us enough voyeuristic jolts to keep us awake. When the picture is over, we realize that the only suspense that it has produced effectively is a weird kind of ideological suspense. Will the movie take its smarmy misogyny all the way, or will it pull back in the end? It goes all the way. Also with George Dzundza and Jeanne Tripplehorn; there's a very peculiar cameo by Dorothy Malone.—T.R. (4/6/92) (Movieland 8th Street Triplex, Loews 19th Street East 6, Loews Orpheum VII, and Olympia. . . . ¶ Gemini, and Criterion Center; through June 18.)

**Bird** (1988)—Clint Eastwood, who directed, gives the life of the master of jazz improvisation—the bebop alto saxophonist Charlie Parker—the art-film treatment: flashbacks, rain, darkness, and a running time of two hours and forty-one minutes. With the film flashing back and forth, you can't get the hang of Parker's life story, and you don't come out with much understanding of his achievement or what made him a legend—the potent archetype of the self-destructive jazz artist. As Parker, Forest Whitaker trudges off to his gigs like a jazz version of Willy Loman; he's always fouling up—boozing and doping and smashing things. Whitaker gives a richly felt performance, yet he comes across as just a genial big blob of a fellow who can't get his life together. Some of his scenes with Diane Venora (as Chan Parker) have tension and a pricklish originality, and a few of his scenes with Michael Zelniker (as Red Rodney) have something comic and unresolved in them—Parker shows a streak of "just kidding" sadism. But mostly it's an earnest, lifeless movie. Joel Oliansky wrote the script; the cast includes Samuel E. Wright as Dizzy Gillespie.—P.K. (Museum of Modern Art; June 21-22. . . . ¶ Film Forum 2; June 22.)

**The Childhood of Maxim Gorky** (1938)—This is the first film of the justly celebrated trilogy directed by Mark Donskoi, based on the memoirs of Maxim Gorky and dealing with the early experiences that turned him into a writer. (The second film is "My Apprenticeship" and the third is "My Universities.") The trilogy is episodic and uneven, but it's charged with a lyric, revolutionary romanticism; it is also believed to be fair and exact in its portrait of czarist Russia. This first

*"Seven Days in May" (playing June 20, at the American Museum of the Moving Image) is a terrifically efficient thriller about an attempted military coup against a President who is pushing nuclear disarmament and is having trouble slamming the brakes on the Cold War economy. Rod Serling shrewdly adapted the Fletcher Knebel-Charles W. Bailey II best-seller for this exciting John Frankenheimer production, from 1964. All the details snap smartly into place. The star-powered cast suits the high-intensity black-and-white filmmaking, with Burt Lancaster as a megalomaniacal general, Kirk Douglas as his skeptical subordinate, Fredric March as the embattled Chief Executive, plus Ava Gardner, Martin Balsam, and Edmond O'Brien in characteristic roles. Frankenheimer is a virtuoso at mixing documentary-style footage with boldly staged action for a crackling "you are there" effect. Watching the film now can make viewers nostalgic for a time when conspiracies were thought to be finite and detectable.*

*"Winter Kills" (playing June 22-24, at the Walter Reade Theatre), by far the lesser movie, fits more snugly into today's political paranoia. Based on a novel by Richard Condon, the author of "The Manchurian Candidate" (which, of course, Frankenheimer had filmed brilliantly), this 1979 release tries to do for the American father what the earlier Condon work did for the American mother, while assembling a jagged conspiracy jigsaw puzzle that's wilder than anything in "JFK." Jeff Bridges plays the half brother of the assassinated "President Kegan"; John Huston struts away with the movie as the ripsnorting head of the Kegan clan. If the writer-director, William Richert, sees America as putty in the hands of mobsters, industrialists, and information brokers, at least it's Silly Putty. And the cinematographer, Vilmos Zsigmond, provides a palette that is both subtle and sharp—the pink of a man's face becomes as telling as the red of his cummerbund. His compositions have a cool kineticism that gives "Winter Kills" its touch of comic-book artistry.*

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film has a wonderful spaciousness; the landscapes are vast and serene, as the boy Alexei (played by Alexei Lyarsky) observes the grandparents who are raising him. The grandfather (Mark Troyanovski) is brutal and authoritarian, and is wasting the family's resources, but the grandmother (Varvara Massalitinova) is a wonder—she has the understanding that her husband lacks. Though the characters are fully realized, it's the expressiveness of the images of the Volga that stays with you. The visual beauty seems to be what holds the episodes together. Donskoi and I. Gruzdev did the unusually faithful adaptation for all three films. In Russian.—P.K. (Museum of Modern Art; June 23.)

**CLASS ACT**—The latest teen comedy to star rapper/actors Kid 'N Play is like their two "House Party" films jumbled together and retooled in a high-school shop class. Kid changes his cloud-scraping haircut for mini-dreadlocks; otherwise, the movie doesn't offer

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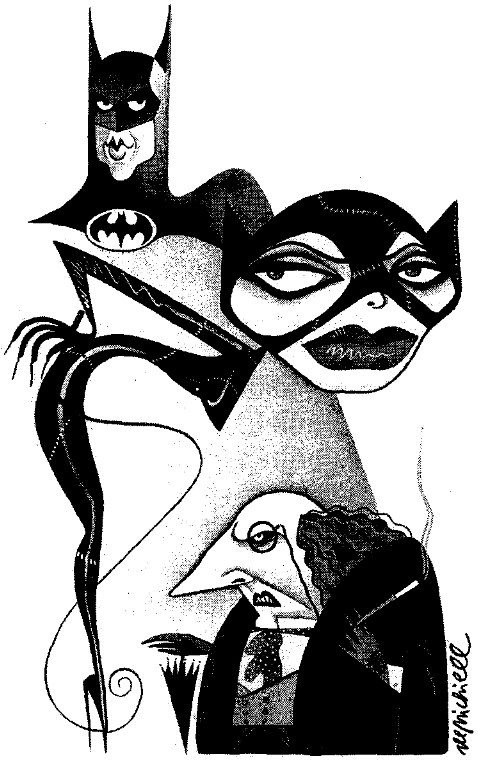


*Michael Keaton, Michelle Pfeiffer, and Danny DeVito in "Batman Returns"*

much in the way of novelty or kicks. Kid is Duncan Pinderhughes, a wonk who doffs button-down collars when a school administrator accidentally switches his identity with that of Blade Brown (Play), a stylish, incorrigible homeboy. This could have been the nub of a real farce. In high school, intelligence is often in the mind of the beholder; students who are labelled "smart" can get special treatment. But the director, Randall Miller, and a cadre of screenwriters (John Semper and Cynthia Friedlob did the script, from a story by Michael Swerdlick, Wayne Rice, and Richard Brenne) come up with little more than brutal slapstick and up-to-the-minute slang. They target vacationing adolescents—there's an anti-drug rap number, a chase through a waxworks, and a fetching girlfriend for each hero. The anti-gay humor is particularly primitive; it reminds you that homophobia refers primarily to fear, not hatred.—M.S. (Movieland 8th Street Triplex, Loews 19th Street East 6, Manhattan Twin, Loews Orpheum VII, Loews 84th Street Sixplex, and National Twin.)

**Cousin Bobby**—Jonathan Demme's film about his cousin Robert Castle, an Episcopal pastor who works in Harlem, has a loose, friendly home-movie quality that's weird but appealing. Bobby is a chunky, balding, sixtyish priest who leads his poor parishioners on protest marches, delivers fiery speeches on the evils of racism, and generally stirs things up on behalf of the disadvantaged, the neglected, and the oppressed. Demme's offhand approach draws us into an unusual kind of intimacy with Bobby and the ravaged urban world he lives in. The movie is a brilliantly original portrait of a complex personality: it does justice to both the continuities and the discontinuities of its subject's life story. Demme, who is onscreen a fair amount, acts as a genial, low-pressure host; his manner is an invitation to the audience to join in the family feeling that's growing between him and his cousin. The movie's rhythm tries to reproduce the odd, intermittent nature of developing friendship—a process that in this case also includes a full, felt understanding of the priest's political ideas. The film ends up being a lovely, amiably persuasive demonstration of the personal sources of political conviction.—T.R. (6/1/92) (Little Theatre.)

**The Crimson Pirate** (1952)—This wonderful travesty of the buccaneer film has the physical exuberance of the early Douglas Fairbanks, Sr., pictures. Burt Lancaster and his old circus partner Nick Cravat tumble and jump with exhilarating grace. They charge the film with physical sensations, and if you wanted to dance after seeing the Rogers-Astaire musicals, you'll want to get in condition after experiencing the acrobatics here. Robert Siodmak's direction is lively; Roland Kibbee's script is bright and improvisatory (much of the film's wit derives from a series of casual anachronisms). With James Hayter as a wildly improbable inventor who looks like Benjamin Franklin, and Eva Bartok, Torin Thatcher, and Margot Grahame. Cinematography by Otto Heller; music by William Alwyn.—P.K. (American Museum of the Moving Image; June 21.)

**Deep Cover**—Hip novelist-screenwriters Michael Tolkin and Henry Bean must not have watched enough TV in the eighties to realize that the premise of their script—an undercover cop gets sucked into big-time drug life—has been done to death. The director, Bill Duke, a veteran of shows like "Hill Street Blues" and "Miami Vice," should have fessed up. Larry Fishburne plays the righteous policeman who goes to work for the D.E.A. and discovers that he loves being a narcotics baron. Jeff Goldblum is the drug-dealing Jewish lawyer who becomes his partner in crime. Goldblum gets most of the good lines and a fair share of the awful ones. He knows what to do with them, but his character is self-loathing and loathsome—the White Negro in a slick post-yuppie edition. The visuals are as gaudy as the language (Bojan Bazelli did the look-at-me cinematography), and the plot is jolt-happy. If there's such a thing as dull flash, "Deep Cover" defines it.—M.S. (Loews Village Theatre VII, and 59th Street East Cinema. . . . ¶ Criterion Center; through June 18.)

**Far and Away**—Despite all the publicity about the film's physical grandeur and the Gaelic heritage of the director, Ron Howard, this historical fantasy, set in the early eighteen-nineties, centers on the spectacle of the real-life spouses Nicole Kidman and Tom Cruise enacting a coltish courtship. She's headstrong Shannon Christie, the only child of a wealthy Irish landowner (Robert Prosky) and a suffocatingly proper mother (Barbara Babcock). He's rebellious Joseph Donelly, a tenant farmer's son who botches an attempt to kill Shannon's father. You may be willing to accept the broad farce and melodrama for the sake of the scenery, shot in an imposing new Panavision Super 70 process. But Cruise and Kidman are a couple of kids playing "Let's pretend." When they reach the United States, you keep waiting for them to light out for the territories. They're stranded in Boston, where she plucks chickens, he becomes a bare-knuckled boxer, and Howard exposes the backside of the American Dream and of America's favorite young star. The director stages the climactic Oklahoma land rush with aplomb, but by then the audience has ceased to care. Mikael Salomon earns his credit for the cinematography.—M.S. (6/1/92) (Murray Hill Cinemas, Baronet, Park & 86th Street Cinemas, Art Greenwich Twin, Chelsea Cinemas, Ziegfeld, and Regency.)

**The Funeral** (1984)—This comedy was the first film written and directed by Juzo Itami; the second was "Tampopo." "The Funeral" isn't as exuberant and recklessly imaginative as the movie that followed it, but it's a funny and intelligent work in its own, more deliberate way. An Altman-like take on an Ozu theme, the film follows a large, extremely modern Japanese family through the ordeal of arranging a traditional religious funeral. Crowded together for several days in the country house of the deceased, the bewildered relatives seem to be living in a severe formal structure that wasn't designed for them. They're like actors in a poorly rehearsed classical play, on an unfamiliar stage—bumping into each other, blowing their lines, looking anxious and miserable. Itami orchestrates their discomfort with real visual wit, and the genuine grief that lies beneath his characters' farcical panic emerges clearly and unsentimentally. Perhaps the movie works because we feel Itami's empathy for the characters: like them, he's trying to find his way in a form that's a bit too controlled and elegant to accommodate his wilder impulses. With Nobuko Miyamoto and Tsutomu Yamazaki, and Ozu veteran Chishu Ryu. Cinematography by Yonezo Maeda.—T.R. (Walter Reade Theatre; June 18 and 21.)

**Howards End**—James Ivory's movie version of the 1910 E. M. Forster novel is a handsome and intelligent piece of work: a faithful, well-paced, and carefully crafted dramatization of a very good story. The heroine, Margaret Schlegel (Emma Thompson), is a thirtyish Englishwoman of German ancestry who lives with her sister and her brother in a London town house. The plot brings the cultured and rather high-minded Schlegels in contact with a very different sort of family, the Wilcoxes, who appear to represent English values at their most infuriatingly solid and complacent. The emotional core of the movie is the brief, unlikely friendship that develops between Margaret and conservative Ruth Wilcox (Vanessa Redgrave), a woman who inhabits a narrow world so profoundly, and with such enormous feeling, that she transforms it. Redgrave is at her most radiant in this role. And Thompson, whose character is meant to be seen as the heir to Mrs. Wilcox's thoroughly English kind of spirituality, comes through with a thrilling, original performance; she carries the movie. These luminous performances go a long way toward putting Forster's ambitious ideas across on the screen. (Anthony Hopkins, as the no-nonsense businessman Henry Wilcox, is awfully good, too.) The story holds us for the full two hours and twenty minutes that the movie takes to tell it; Ivory and his screenwriter, Ruth Prawer Jhabvala, have done a skillful and sensitive job of adaptation. All that's missing, really, is the elusive quality that makes Forster such a brave, moving writer: his constant striving to see beyond the story, to see through it, to transcend it. Also with Helena Bonham Carter, Samuel West, James Wilby, Nicola Duffett, Prunella Scales, and Adrian Ross Magenty.—T.R. (5/4/92) (Loews Fine Arts.)

**Incident at Oglala**—Michael Apted's documentary is an investigative report on the case of Leonard Peltier, an American Indian Movement activist who was convicted of killing two F.B.I. agents in a 1975 shootout on the Pine Ridge reservation, in South Dakota. The movie contends that Peltier (who has been serving time for the murders since 1977) was railroaded by the F.B.I. The filmmakers don't require us to believe that Peltier is innocent (although they clearly think he is). They concentrate on demonstrating that he didn't get a fair trial: the movie is built on an accumulation of subtle discrepancies and nagging doubts, rather than on a sense of inexorable progress toward a smoking-gun solution. For the most part, Apted guides us through this tangle of ambiguous evidence and back-and-forth legal maneuvering with patient, unobtrusive skill, and the cool rationality of his manner makes the movie's arguments seem all the more irrefutable. The picture never tries to whip us into a frenzy of indignation, but its restrained, lawyerly laying out of a pattern of injustice is devastatingly effective. Narrated by Robert Redford (who is also the executive producer).—T.R. (6/1/92) (Loews Village Theatre VII.)

**Lethal Weapon 3**—When that manic L.A.P.D. detective Martin Riggs (Mel Gibson) visits the home of rough-and-ready I.A.D. cop Lorna Cole (Rene Russo), he notices that her personal computer contains Three Stooges software. Moe, Larry, and Curly, who showed up in a film clip in "LW2," have become the guiding spirits of the series. The director, Richard Donner, and the screenwriters, Jeffrey Boam and Robert Mark Kamen, are too proud of their hit formula. They keep restating it: Cole describes the career of Riggs and his staid partner, Roger Murtaugh (Danny Glover), as a combination of "*The Police Gazette* and *Mad* magazine." Topically enough, the villain is a sadistic, corrupt ex-cop (played by Stuart Wilson). But all Donner and company deliver is their usual quasi-comic "chaos and mayhem." Joe Pesci surfaces again as Valley-speaking fixer Leo Getz, presumably to prove that the more stooges the merrier. But the central gag goes unstated. Riggs and Murtaugh are supposed to be effective. The "Lethal Weapon" movies put Keystone Kops on the Thin Blue Line and ask us to cheer them toward victory.—M.S. (Movieland 8th Street Triplex, Loews 19th Street East 6, Loews 34th Street Showplace, Loews New York Twin, Loews Orpheum VII, Loews 84th Street Sixplex, and Criterion Center.)

**A Midnight Clear**—Everything about this anti-war film is geared for poignancy, from the snow-swept settings (the area around Park City, Utah, stands in for Europe) to the Christian symbolism. But what keeps viewers watching this tale of six young G.I.s on the German-French border in the winter of 1944 is the tense jeopardy of military service. The heroes belong to a genius-I.Q. intelligence-and-reconnaissance unit; the action hinges on their vain attempt to complete a rapprochement with a handful of weary Germans. The movie is high-strung yet shock-proofed. A voice-over narration sets a tone of boyish contemplation and signals that there'll be spiritual solace even if the worst happens. The writer-director, Keith Gordon, has reverently adapted William Wharton's 1982 novel. His movie has no traction, only a holy, sepulchral glow. It's so determined to be haunting that it gives up the ghost. Ethan Hawke, Gary Sinise, Frank Whaley, Kevin Dillon, Peter Berg, and Arye Gross play the soldiers; Mark Isham did the rustling mood music, and Tom Richmond the blue-white cinematography.—M.S. (5/18/92) (Plaza, and Worldwide Cinemas. . . . ¶ Quad Cinema; through June 18.)

**My Cousin Vinny**—The recipe behind this Dixie-based comedy hit is simple. The Southern characters consider themselves the salt of the earth; the Northern ones are proud to be the pepper. Joe Pesci plays Vinny Gambini, a neophyte Brooklyn lawyer who hightails it down to Wahzoo City, Alabama, to help his college-boy cousin (Ralph Macchio) and a friend (Mitchell Whitfield) beat a bum murder rap. Vinny's quest takes at least thirty minutes too long. The producer-screenwriter, Dale Launer, bides his time, scattering hoary gags while planting details that eventually pay off. Luckily, the director, Jonathan Lynn, keeps the cork on Pesci, releasing his energy only in the trial sequences, and doesn't rely on him to carry the movie. Marisa Tomei, as Vinny's fiancée, imbues the most obligatory reactions with either a startling ferocity or a farcical ambiguity worthy of her character's name: Mona Lisa Vito. Fred Gwynne brings a wise, weighty charm to the role of a Yale-educated judge; in a cartoon, he'd be a basset hound called Beauregard. When Pesci sags, Tomei, Gwynne, and others (especially Austin Pendleton) perk things up. At best, it's a genial variety show that could use more variety.—M.S. (4/20/92) (Crown Gotham, 23rd St. West Triplex, and Worldwide Cinemas.)

**Night on Earth**—This anthology film, written and directed by Jim Jarmusch ("Stranger Than Paradise"), has a gimmicky premise. Each of its five stories takes place in a different city, and each is about a taxicab ride. All the trips are going on at the same time, but in different time zones, so there's an illusion of temporal progress: the picture begins at sunset in Los Angeles and ends at dawn in Helsinki. (The intervening episodes take place in New York, Paris, and Rome.) It's a feeble but serviceable conceit; if the sketches were funny, we'd barely notice the preciousness of the structure. Unfortunately, the material is very thin, and the movie doesn't vary its style from sketch to sketch: Jarmusch sticks doggedly to his trademark deadpan manner. The comedian Roberto Benigni, playing a motor-mouth cabbie in the Italian episode, briefly enlivens the picture with a riotous erotic monologue. But, for the most part, the movie induces in the viewer an eerie, suspended feeling that mimics the time-stands-still monotony of a long airplane journey. It tries for a chipper, lighthearted tone, but it gives the audience a gruelling flight—a red-eye to nowhere. Also with Winona Ryder, Gena Rowlands, Giancarlo Esposito, Armin Mueller-Stahl, Rosie Perez, Isaach de Bankolé, Béatrice Dalle, and Matti Pellonpää. In English, French, Italian, and Finnish.—T.R. (5/18/92) (Angelika Film Center, and 62nd & Broadway.)

**Patriot Games**—Phillip Noyce's film, adapted from one of Tom Clancy's jillion-selling suspense novels, is a much more effective thriller than it has any right to be. The screenwriters, W. Peter Iliff and Donald Stewart, have eliminated much of the novel's hot air without entirely knocking the wind out of the material; the script tones down Clancy's right-wing ideology and gives the story some straightforward action-movie narrative drive. The plot, which pits Irish terrorists against an Annapolis history professor and sometime C.I.A. anaylst named Jack Ryan (Harrison Ford), is ridiculous, boys'-adventure stuff, but the filmmakers almost put it across. Noyce handles the action sequences beautifully: they're lucid and exciting, and their construction has a kind of formal elegance that's oddly satisfying. (He's less successful with the scenes of the Ryan family's domestic bliss, which are meant to establish Jack's credentials as a champion of traditional values.) Ford brings a welcome trace of ambivalence to his character's heroics—a sense that Ryan isn't altogether proud of the lethal efficiency he displays when he's drawn into combat. Sean Bean, Richard Harris, and (especially) James Fox do nice work in supporting roles. This is an expert, entertaining genre picture. Noyce and his team serve Clancy's crude material well—too well, probably. Also with Anne Archer (who's awful), Thora Birch, James Earl Jones, Samuel L. Jackson, and Patrick Bergin. Cinematography by Donald McAlpine.—T.R. (6/15/92) (Loews Village Theatre VII, Loews 34th Street Showplace, Loews New York Twin, U.A. East, Chelsea Cinemas, Loews 84th Street Sixplex, and Loews Astor Plaza.)

**The Playboys**—This absorbing, uneven romantic comedy-drama, set in a small Irish town in 1957, takes its name from a travelling troupe. The heroine is an unwed mother named Tara (Robin Wright). She challenges every male authority figure in town and drives all the men wild—especially the violent, alcoholic constable, Sergeant Hegarty (Albert Finney), who seethes when he sees her with her actor lover Tom (Aidan Quinn). The screenwriters, Shane Connaughton (who co-wrote "My Left Foot") and Kerry Crabbe, are full of ideas and observations about orthodox religion, claustrophobic village mores, the craziness of life in a divided country, and the last gasp of strolling players before TV's ascendancy. Wright and Quinn are well matched, and the director, Gillies MacKinnon, and his cinematographer, Jack Conroy, provide images that sparkle with amorous possibilities. But the filmmakers don't funnel their panoply of themes gracefully into Tara's story. Her affair with Tom comes off as a foil to Finney's passionate portrait of stewed wrath and despair. He endows a clenched, masochistic character with such scale and force that he takes over the movie.—M.S. (5/18/92) (Gramercy, and Cinema 3rd Avenue.)

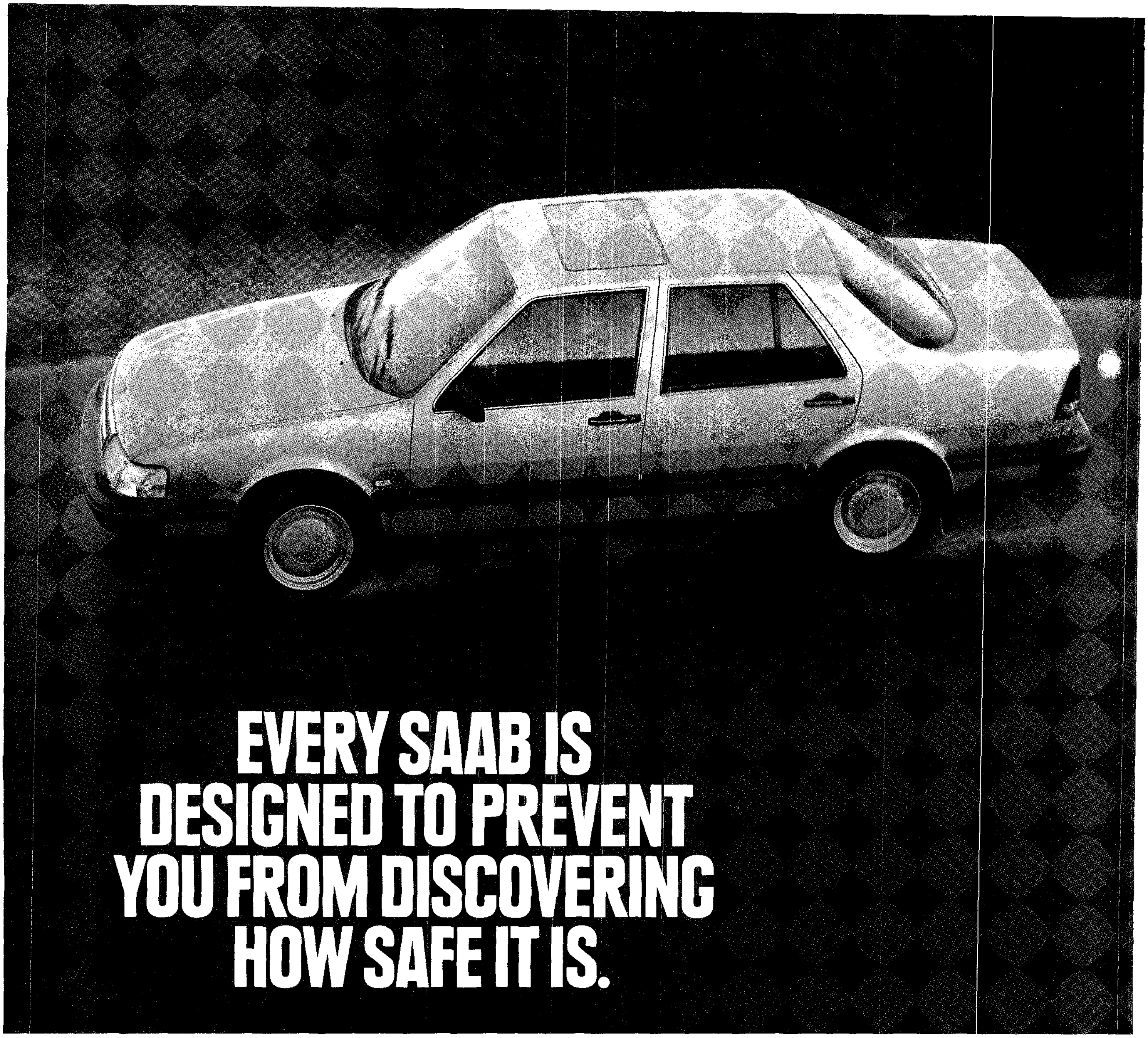
**The Player**—The title character of Robert Altman's new movie is a young Hollywood studio executive named Griffin Mill (Tim Robbins), who, for no very good reason, murders an aspiring screenwriter. The picture is a brilliant dark comedy about the death of American filmmaking. It's like a documentary about a mirage: the world it shows us is sunlit and shimmering, and the people have the thin presence of holograms. Altman is doing one of his specialties here—exploring an odd American subculture—and when his idiosyncratic realism is applied to the insular, constantly self-regarding community of Hollywood "players" it has an almost hallucinatory effect. The movie has the exhilarating nonchalance of the director's seventies classics, and its tone is volatile, elusive: with breathtaking assurance, it veers from psychological-thriller suspense to goofball comedy to icy satire. Altman turns the self-reflective world of Hollywood into a fun house in which every grotesque distortion somehow appears to us as a newly discovered, paradoxical truth. Robbins gives a layered, richly suggestive performance—the sort of performance that Altman's style, at its best, produces without obvious effort. At sixty-seven, Altman still seems like the youngest filmmaker in America. Also with Greta Scacchi, Peter Gallagher, Fred Ward, Whoopi Goldberg, Cynthia Stevenson, Vincent D'Onofrio, Lyle Lovett, Dean Stockwell, and Richard E. Grant; dozens of movie stars (and a handful of writers) turn up in cameos. The script, by Michael Tolkin, is adapted from his own novel.—T.R. (4/20/92) (Beekman, Art Greenwich Twin, Chelsea Cinemas, Worldwide Cinemas, and Loews 84th Street Sixplex.)

**Sister Act**—Whoopi Goldberg stars as a Reno lounge singer on the lam from her murderous mobster ex-lover (Harvey Keitel). Disguised as a nun in a San Francisco convent, she manages to bring new music into the choir, fresh street faces into the pews, and a social-activist spirit into the revitalized congregation. The plot and the characters are almost insultingly perfunctory (the pseudonymous Joseph Howard is credited with the script), and when there isn't any rock on the soundtrack the moviemaking is listless. Still, the director, Emile Ardolino, who made "Dirty Dancing," knows how to use sixties hits for an over-all bounce that jumps audiences past dead patches. Goldberg maintains her gruff tone, which helps keep the film from stagnating with sappiness. If Maggie Smith glowers ineffectually as the Mother Superior, a couple of actresses—Kathy Najimy and Mary Wickes—imbue their nun roles with the euphoria of inspired farceurs. (Najimy defines "overjoyed.") The film isn't a divine comedy, and it's not satisfyingly profane either. But it generates a few laughs. It's got a good beat, and you can dance to it.—M.S. (6/15/92) (Village East Cinemas, Murray Hill Cinemas, Cinema I, 86th Street East Twin, Chelsea Cinemas, Guild, Loews 84th Street Sixplex, and Embassy 1.)

**The Waterdance**—This semi-autobiographical movie about paraplegics carries its weight of authority lightly. The writer and co-director, Neal Jimenez, whose credits include the screenplay for "River's Edge," became wheelchair-bound after a hiking accident, like his central figure here, a novelist named Joel Garcia (Eric Stoltz). Jimenez and his directing partner, Michael Steinberg, approach each problem head on, from racial tension in the hospital ward to Joel's sexual anguish, while trying to leave the incidents lifelike and ambiguous. There are no inspirational speeches, and every climax turns out to be anti-. But at best this film is a compendium of negative virtues. The men progress predictably toward railing at the universe. The movie's most original stroke is to center the action on a hyperconscious lead character. Unfortunately, Joel is the autobiographical hero as abashed apologist, laying out and criticizing his experiences without exposing his core. He's fuzzy and pallid compared to his compadres, the white racist biker Bloss (William Forsythe) and the black former ladies' man Ray Hill (Wesley Snipes). Forsythe's tender gnarliness and Snipes's electric lyricism are the best reasons to see the movie. With Helen Hunt, Grace Zabriskie, and Elizabeth Peña.—M.S. (6/15/92) (Angelika Film Center, and First & 62nd Cinemas.)

**Wisecracks**—The Canadian filmmaker Gail Singer explores the pressures on women comedians while showcasing performers ranging from Phyllis Diller, Whoopi Goldberg, and the talk-show host Jenny Jones (in her standup days) to a trio of madly inventive lip-synchers known as the Clichettes. In interviews and clips, Singer's subjects manage to be witty about everything from P.M.S. to pro-lifers, including the hostility these standups sometimes face from audiences and promoters alike. Singer doesn't pose any topic that comics like Maxine Lapiduss, Ellen DeGeneres, Sandra Shamas, Joy Behar, and Lotus Weinstock can't riff on or parody. The director has a sure sense of balance: she knows that what sounds portentous in theory can be hilarious in practice. Her movie succeeds as investigation because it also succeeds as entertainment.—M.S. (6/1/92) (Film Forum.)

**The Year of Living Dangerously** (1983)—Peter Weir's romantic adventure film is set in Indonesia in 1965, during the political upheavals that shook President Sukarno's unstable government, and centers on the Caucasian community of journalists and diplomats in Jakarta. Linda Hunt has the pivotal male role of the goblinlike Billy Kwan, a half-Chinese, half-Australian cameraman who plays matchmaker and brings together Mel Gibson, as a newly arrived Australian foreign correspondent, and Sigourney Weaver, as the assistant military attaché at the British Embassy. To a degree, Weir is the victim of his own skill at creating the illusion of authentic Third World misery, rioting, and chaos; the emaciation of the natives overwhelms the made-up problems of the Caucasians. But movie squalor has its own glamour, and scene by scene this film is fascinating; despite a certain amount of mystical-East blather, it's alive on the screen. A new-style old-time "dangerous" steaminess builds up as Gibson and Weaver eye each other. And though Billy Kwan is the movie's walking conscience and higher moral purpose, Linda Hunt's lyric intensity and concentration help to purify the lines she speaks. Filmed in the Philippines and Australia. With Bill Kerr, Michael Murphy, Bembol Roco, and Noel Ferrier. The score is entertaining, with records that range from Richard Strauss to Little Richard, and background music by Maurice Jarre, in which gamelan gong sounds are never far away; the script by David Williamson, Weir, and C.J. Koch is based on Koch's highly readable 1978 novel.—P.K. (Theatre 80 St. Marks; June 23.)



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THE NEW YORKER

# THE TALK OF THE TOWN

## Notes and Comment

A FRIEND writes:

I think it may at last be time for me to confess that I am the other guy who didn't inhale. The *only* other one, apparently, to judge from the roar of derision and disbelief that greeted Governor Clinton's now famous confession. I've kept this to myself for weeks, and might have kept it to myself forever had I not, just a couple of days ago, found myself reading a biography of Harry Crosby, the sun-worshipping American poet of the twenties, whose suicide, the fulfillment of a pact with a girlfriend, was one of the great scandals of its time. In Paris in the twenties, his biographer explained, Crosby engaged in pagan rites, attended flagellation parties, drank like a fish, and eventually became a habitual opium user. The only thing that Harry Crosby was frightened of was hashish: its effects scared him. I read this with amazement, for by the time I was fifteen most of the kids I knew were complaining that hashish was no longer having the effect on them that it had had back when they were fourteen. All at once, that whole dope-smoking era came back to me. Although I am almost a decade younger than Governor Clinton, he and I went through more or less the same experience at more or less the same time, and it now seemed to me that the whole question of inhaling or not inhaling, and of what was or was not being inhaled, had been given more importance than it deserved. So I decided that my memories of not inhaling might be useful after all.

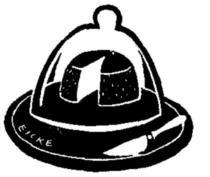
At the age of twelve, in the spring of 1967, I was in love with the most advanced girl in the eighth-grade class of a junior high school in Philadelphia. She was called, let's say, Mimi Hardiman. She had been to London with her family on her last summer vacation; she had long blond hair, and wore granny glasses and long gypsy dresses; she was a Jimi Hendrix fan when the rest of us were still buying Lovin' Spoonful singles; she inhaled. She smoked cigarettes in the schoolyard, pulling the smoke into her lungs with a sexual intensity that I believe she had absorbed from watching Jeanne Moreau in "Jules et Jim." (We had a class in "cinema"; it was that kind of junior high.) She also smoked morning-glory cigarettes and oven-dried banana skins, which in those days had a reputation as intoxicants. She even sold surplus morning-glory cigarettes to the rest of the class—my best friend bought a Band-Aid box full of them. I was younger than most of the kids, and had a natural coward's excessive respect for the law, so I just watched. But I was picking up the social ritual—learning how you did it all—and storing it away.

Then, on an afternoon in late April, that same best friend persuaded me to cut school for the afternoon. We went down to Rittenhouse Square and hung out, and after about fifteen minutes my friend said that Mimi's parents were away someplace, and why didn't we go over to her house and try hanging out there? So we went to Mimi's house. Other people began drifting in. In fact, I could hardly believe who some of these people drifting in were: the English teacher who had let Mimi "analyze" Tim Hardin lyrics for her poetry project; the seventh-grade student teacher; the guidance counsellor. The *guidance counsellor* was hanging out at Mimi Hardiman's house! I was so aghast that I wasn't really surprised when somebody said he had some grass in his car, and everybody else said, with great cool, "Oh, go get it." Nobody said this with greater cool than I did.

The marijuana was fetched, a joint was rolled in Zig Zag papers and passed around, and eventually it came to me. I had been preparing for this moment for a long time, watching Mimi and everybody else smoking garden supplies out in the schoolyard. The catch, I knew, as the joint (fat, and disconcertingly hot) came my way, was that just inhaling was not going to be enough. While inhaling, you also had to make the inhale face. The inhale face, which was later disseminated by Peter Fonda in "Easy Rider" and, later still, vulgarized by Cheech and Chong, was as fixed a ritual as a Cub Scout handshake. Your mouth had to compress into a little ring, with pained intensity radiating out to all corners of your face, like an aureole; simultaneously, your eyes had to crease (rather than merely shut) tight in ecstasy while you worked your eyebrows up and down. Second-class inhalers, I knew, simply drove their eyebrows down toward their nose, like tent spikes; skilled inhalers, like Mimi, could somehow raise their eyebrows in serene pleasure even as their mouths scrunched up in intense, voracious intake.

There was something no one had explained to me, though (or to young Bill Clinton, I suspect), which was that it is almost impossible for a novice marijuana smoker to make the inhale face while actually inhaling. In the moment when I had the joint to my lips, and my mouth filled with that acrid, slightly sweet, and altogether disgusting smoke, it became evident to me that I had a choice. And since I could see no point in actually inhaling—simply being in that room had put me in a De Quincey-like state of hallucinatory intoxication—while there was a lot to be lost by not making the inhale face, I concentrated on the latter. I got the little Life Saver mouth right, I peaked my eyebrows, I slid my eyes shut, and then I mimed drawing in the smoke in a long, steady stream. Reluctantly, I passed the joint along, and then, turning my head away, as though in private reverie, I expelled the smoke from the pouches of my cheeks into the musty back of the Hardiman family's sofa.

That was how I spent the Summer of Love—elevating my eyebrows and blowing smoke into the back of the couch. The pot parties (no one called them that, of course) went on at Mimi's house almost every afternoon for the entire summer. The few times I drew the smoke even close to the edge of my throat, I could feel the onset of a really vengeful coughing fit, and, besides, like Harry Crosby, I was scared of the effects. So the smoke remained in my mouth—where, it occurs to me only now, its presence was probably completely visible to my friends.



Unless, of course, they weren't inhaling, either. Is it possible that *nobody* inhaled—that all of us, sitting in that circle of smokers that girdled the world in those years, were intoxicated by nothing more than our own social ritual, and are still too embarrassed to admit it? Probably not. And yet ingesting smoke was in some ways the least important part of that ritual. Just the other night, after I had remembered all this, I heard Governor Clinton, on David Frost's program, trying to enlarge on his remark. His story, as it poured out in detail, was a good deal like mine: a night in an Oxford college, an intimidated kid from the sticks *wanting* to inhale but not quite knowing how. Every aspect of the experience was still available to Clinton—you could see that. Maybe when we're young we *do* inhale—breathe in everything, whether we know it or not—and then have to spend the rest of our lives breathing it all back out.

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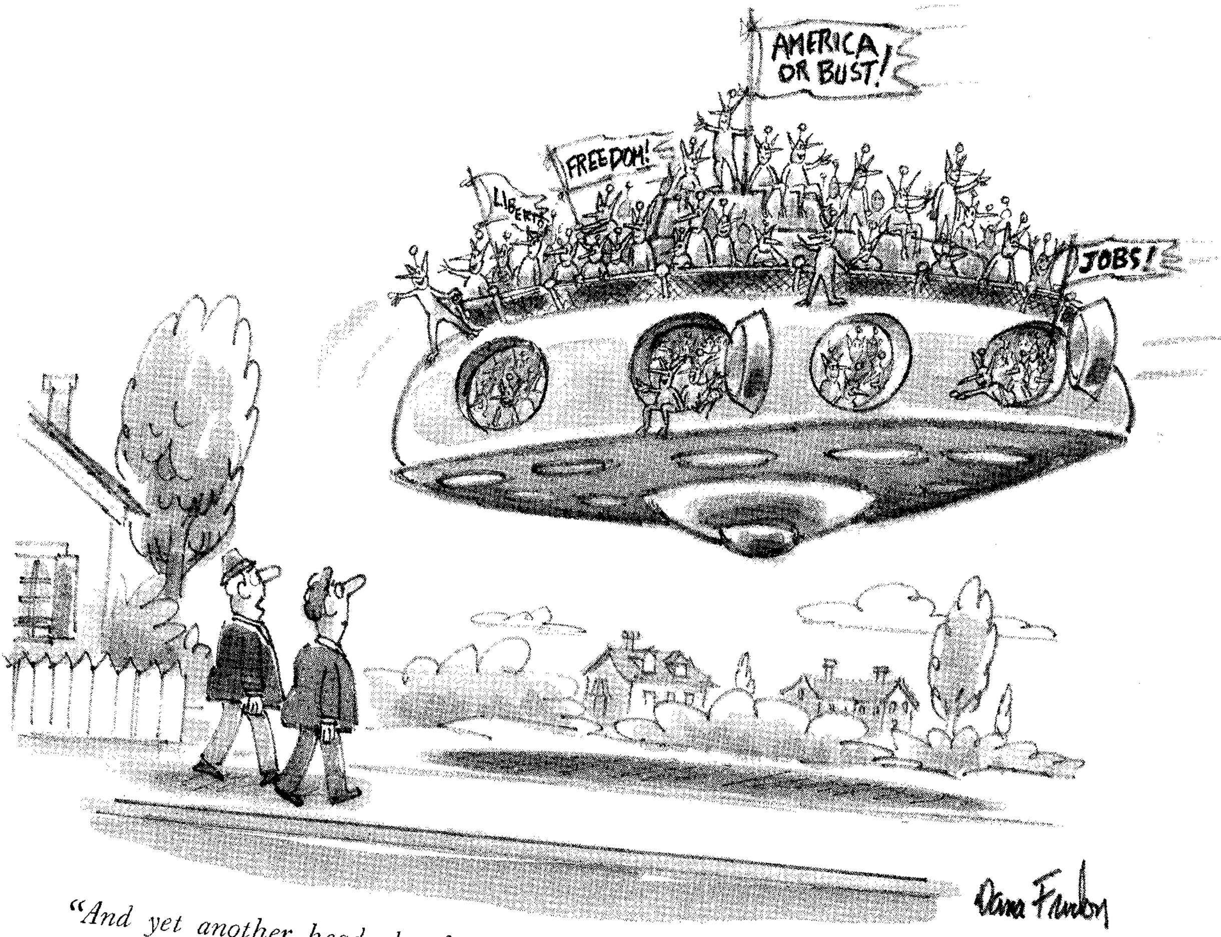
## *Safe*

RICHARD KRASILOVSKY, the owner of Empire Safe, learned about safes from his father, Monroe Krasilovsky, and *he* learned about them from Mike Krasilovsky, his much older brother. Mike Krasilovsky's motto was "There's only one Mike Krasilovsky." Mike was a safe-mover. In the old days, before power machinery, moving safes was perhaps a greater skill than making or selling safes. Safe-movings were public events. "Tremendous crowds used to gather on Fifth Avenue whenever our family rigged a new safe into Tiffany or Cartier," Monroe says. "We'd have a man sitting right on top of the safe as it went up, pushing with his legs to keep it away from the side of the building." By 1960, when Mike died, safe-moving had entered its twilight, and Monroe had gone into safe-selling. His motto was "Everybody knows Krasilovsky." "Back then, nobody was making good safes," Monroe says. "Alarm systems were all the rage." An alarm-maker is a safe-maker's natural enemy. Fortunately for the Krasilovskys, burglars acquired anti-alarm know-how during the sixties. Then, in the seventies, the United States went off the gold standard, and the price of gold began to shoot upward. Soon everybody needed a safe. In 1977, Richard finally perceived that his destiny lay in safes. "I was very happy when Richard decided to come into the business," Monroe says. Richard says, "It took me a long time to come to terms with safes. After college, I went out and lived in Big Sur for a year. I had this idea I wanted to be a photographer. I used to spend hours watching hawks on the cliffs between Big Sur and Monterey." Richard is now forty-one years old. His motto is simply "The right safe."

Empire Safe occupies the ground floor of a large, wedge-shaped building at the intersection of Canal and Varick Streets. The interior of the shop is decorated in industrial grays. Being there is not unlike being inside an enormous safe. On display are wall safes, jewelry safes, cash-drop safes, and data safes. Also classic antique safes—a Mosler four-hour-fire-resistant safe, a Herring-Hall-Marvin cast-iron safe, a York cannonball safe—that Richard has lovingly reconditioned and keeps around for sentimental reasons. A while back, Richard commissioned Red Grooms, Richard Haas, Tony Spengler, and some other artists to make art out of safes, and the results are scattered around the store. (A dog, teeth bared, with a safe full of bones for a belly, is Grooms' effort.) Right inside the front door are the digital safes, now the best-selling safes for the home. "Everybody calls me—they say, 'Gimme a push-button safe like the one I used in the hotel,' " Richard says, pantomiming someone talking into a phone. As a purist, he has mixed feelings about digital technology. "Personally, I enjoy spinning the dial and hearing the tumblers fall," he says. "But maybe that's a masculine turn-on."

On a hot afternoon, it's pleasant to lean against one of the big, cold safes and watch the salesmen work. "A lot of my customers are in a paranoid state when they walk in here," Richard says. "They've recently been ripped off, and they suspect their employees, their kids, their wife—everyone." Those customers turn to Richard for reassurance. His special gift is to persuade a customer who thought he wanted a small safe that in fact he needs something much larger—possibly even a modular vault room, which Richard will design and install in his home. "I say to my customers, 'Do me a favor. Go home. Look at your furniture, art, furs—whatever—and ask yourself "What if my teen-age kids have a party?" and "How comfortable do I feel if there's a contractor around?" ' A lot of people come back to me and say, 'You know something, Richard? I'd like more space to put my things away.' "


AMERICA OR BUST!
FREEDOM!
LIBERTY
JOBS!
Dana Fradon

*"And yet* ***another*** *headache for the Immigration and Naturalization Service!"*

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Not everyone who comes into Empire is bent out of shape. Sometimes a customer is relaxed and knowledgeable, and asks Richard probing questions about a particular safe—the type of alloy, the locking mechanism, the weak spots. "Suddenly, a feeling will come over me, and I'll just close up." This customer is a burglar, casing a safe. Richard's relationship with burglars is complicated: he is trying to put them out of business, but if he succeeds he will be out of business, too. The criminal mind of the nineteen-nineties does not impress him. "Ninety-nine point nine per cent of today's burglars are not sophisticated criminals," he says, somewhat ruefully. "They know how to use hand tools—that's it." Manipulation—the art of safecracking—apparently went out with safe-moving. One of the few manipulators still around works at Empire: Richard offers the man's services to clients who are locked out of their safes and don't want them drilled. But Richard does not seem to be eager to talk about this end of the business. "Wait a second," he says. "Here I am telling you this stuff, and I don't really know who you are. Could I see some credentials, or something?"

The afternoon wears on. A salesman shows a jeweller the ISM Super Treasury model, the safest safe in the store. He is permanently missing the nails on his right hand—a safe-door-related accident. "Now, this safe is a TRTL-30x6," he says, meaning that technicians at the Underwriters Laboratories in Northbrook, Illinois, where safes are tested, worked on the safe with sophisticated torches (TR) and tools (TL) without getting in. Also on display is an ISM that resisted an attack by actual burglars. Terrible black scars cover its body, suggesting great violence done by desperate men.

Richard has yet to produce the next generation of Krasilovskys. "Richard has been so involved in safes for the last fifteen years he hasn't had time for anything else," Monroe says.

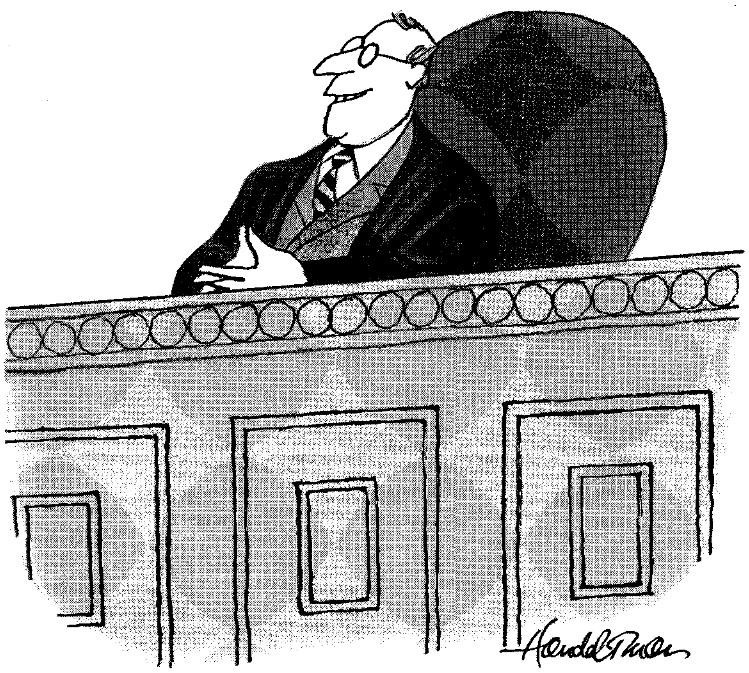
Richard: "Safes can get pretty consuming."

Monroe: "Now I hope he will settle down."

## *Finer*

THE big news in the rag trade is that there are going to be fewer luxury rags in our future. We mean real rags, like the former Ralph Lauren shirt you've been using to clean the kitchen backsplash. From now on, if a garment feels great and looks great, and costs an arm and a leg, it will probably wear like iron and rebuff all liquids. It will also rebuff any connection with nature, but that's going to make recycling easier. (We'll explain in a moment.) The reason for all this can be summed up in a word: "microfibres." If expensive clothes regularly go through your hands, you already know about microfibres. They're used in those raincoats that feel like silk, for example, and in lingerie that feels like skin. And if you know about microfibres you probably also know about sky-high dry-cleaning bills. A lot of cleaners have heard of the stuff but aren't sure how to treat it, and so they give it extra-special care, just as if it were silk or suède or some other precious natural fibre that microfibres have been invented to replace. This situation is sure to change as more people listen to the message from the manufacturers that many microfibre garments can be thrown right into the washing machine and come out looking brand-new.

We learned all this and more when we dropped into the Hotel Macklowe the other day for a show of microfibre fashions, which was part of a conference put on by the Polyester Council of America. Now that we've got your attention, we can confess that microfibres are the tony version of your everyday polyesters. Polyester used to take it on the chin, simply because it wasn't a natural fibre. That was back in the days when people wore fur coats actually made from animals. A big joke then went like this: There are two guys in a bar. The first leans over to the second and says, "Hey, pal, can I ask you a personal question?" The second one nods, and the first says, "Tell me, how many polyesters died to make that suit?" Jokes like that just won't go over today, because, for one thing, the Polyester Council of America can tell you how many microfibre filaments died to make a single strand of yarn for the finest microfibre garments: two hundred and fifty-six.



*"Call it 'legislating from the bench,' if you will, but on this occasion I should like to repeal the First Amendment."*

O.K., we had promised to fill you in on microfibres' benefits to recycling. Microfibres are made of something called polyethylene terephthalate, one component of which is basically the antifreeze in your car, after it has been subjected to high heat and pressure. PET—that's what the microfibre industry calls polyethylene terephthalate, for short—is extremely versatile. Not only can it be extruded to make the fibres but it can be rolled out to make sheets of film and videotape, and it can be blown, like glass, to make plastic bottles and stemware. What this means is that someday, on getting home from work, you may be able to unwind by melting your designer suit into, say, a couple of plastic wineglasses and a copy of "Terminator 2.".

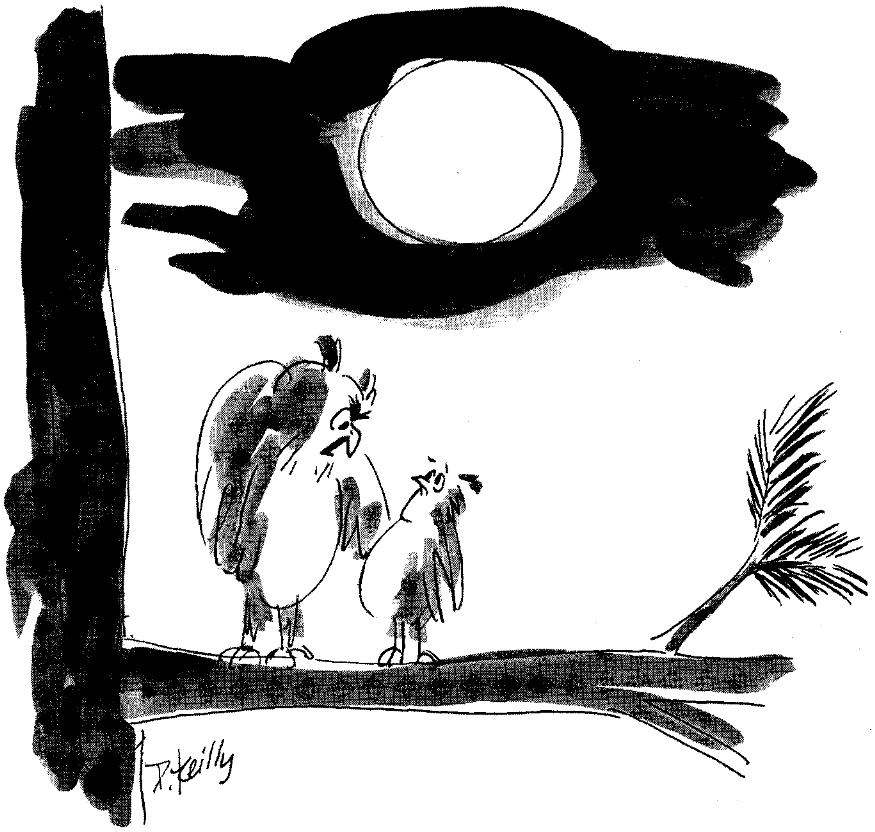
Unfortunately, not everyone is microfibre-minded yet, and one of the people who aren't was our companion at the fashion show. Her name is Jonnie. She is a native New Yorker of a certain age, she is built like a ballet dancer, and she stopped paying attention to fashion back in the seventies, when she concluded that men's clothing is the best-tailored, snappiest, and most comfortable clothing in the world. Very, very fine men's clothing, that is—bespoke-tailored. When Jonnie and her husband, Roger, go to black-tie museum openings, they both wear black pants and handmade tuxedo jackets. As it happens, the man-tailored look is back in fashion for women, so when Jonnie walked into the Hotel Macklowe she was right up to the minute in a Harris tweed hacking jacket, a silk-lined houndstooth cashmere vest, an oxford broadcloth shirt, thin wool-gabardine trousers, and a panama hat. But fashion is not why we urged Jonnie to come along with us: she is also a seamstress, and knows everything about fabric. We asked her if she could remember when she first learned about man-made fabric. She thought for a moment, and said, "When I was a kid, at the 1939 World's Fair, I saw a demonstration of how nylon was made. On one side of a partition they had a sort of sealed fish tank holding coal and water and air, and on the other side gossamer threads were coming out of holes in the partition and being wound onto a cone, as if the transformation process were happening right there, as you looked."

What did you like best about that demonstration, we asked.

"The hype was divine," she said. "And the best part of it was that we didn't know it was hype. The seduction was complete."

## *Conglomeration*

YOU'D think that thunderstorms would have been enough—that we would have been excused from attending an outdoor concert on such a day—but Apple & Eve, New York's local juice company, is awfully persistent. "Apple & Eve," its slogan goes, "always gives you 100%." So last Monday evening, despite the weather report, we went to the Central Park Zoo, which is presenting a series of jazz concerts under the co-sponsorship of radio station WQCD and of Apple & Eve, which, in turn, is promoting four new lines of iced tea. This concert featured Tuck & Patti, a guitar-playing husband and a scat-singing wife, who perform bafflingly complex arrangements of tunes you may already know, and equally complex arrangements of songs they've written themselves. One in particular, Tuck's version of the Stevie Wonder song "I Wish," is so difficult to perform that he has been practicing it for over twelve years without success. "After a while, I became quite content with the fact that I couldn't play it," he announced. He did what he could with it, though, for an audience of about twelve hundred people crowded between the sea-lion pool (he and Patti were on a stage in front of it) and the surrounding gardens. Tuck says that the hardest thing to master in playing guitar is the consolidation of bass line and melody. We, for our part, were having a hard time consolidating all the elements of this particular evening—the concert, the sea lions, the Park, the New York skyline against the flat, white sky, and, don't forget, four new kinds of fruit-flavored iced tea.



"*Pay no attention to what they say. Spotted owls aren't any better than you are.*"

Tuck made a stab at a unified theory, pointing out the sea lions and remarking that he had been cautioned to expect a pretty diverse crowd and also that he had learned a lot about playing guitar from watching animals. "All of which is apropos of absolutely nothing," he added, "because this has nothing to do with the song I'm about to play." As the concert went on, we leafed through some press releases and read a blurb about the history of Apple & Eve, which was founded in 1975—not so long before Tuck first conceived of the impossible arrangement of "I Wish"—by a young man named Gordon Crane. Mr. Crane has since turned his less-than-two-thousand-dollar investment into a thirty-five-million-dollar company, we learned, and is known as "the Horatio Alger of the juice business." He was the first to introduce, among other things, "the revolutionary shelf-stable aseptic brik pac."

According to Gordon Crane, this is the dawning of the age of "alternative beverages." Iced tea, for instance, especially when it is sweetened with honey instead of sugar, is "going to be explosive." "See, I know what's going on out there," Mr. Crane told us during the concert. "I know that Coca-Cola, the largest beverage-distributing company in the world, is teaming up with Nestlé, the largest food company in the world, to make an iced-tea product; that Pepsi is joining Lipton; that Perrier is aligned with Celestial—and the list goes on. Coke and Nestlé are investing twenty million dollars in marketing alone for this product. It is not going to fail. Right now, soft drinks are a fifty-billion-dollar annual market. Tea represents a billion, and ready-to-drink iced tea only about fifty million. There's lots of room for expansion. I mean, sure, iced tea could turn out to be the wine cooler of the nineties, but then it could also be the bottled water."

We asked what all this had to do with Tuck & Patti and the Central Park Zoo. Mr. Crane pointed out that the zoo suggested Eden, and so did the company's name. He also pointed out that the audience was just the sort he needed to target—that is, an audience that listens to performers who record, as Tuck & Patti do, for Windham Hill Records. Alternative beverages, he explained, are a New Age phenomenon—something Mr. Crane knows about personally. "When I started this company, back in '75, I had hair down my back and I was into yoga," he said. "It's not that way anymore, but in those days I needed to do something that was pure, something that was all natural, so I got into fruit juices. Now I just think our products taste better."

Tuck had meanwhile launched into "Europa"—a guitar instrumental that seemed at least as taxing as the impossible "I Wish." "That reflects my philosophy of business," Mr. Crane said of the performance. "Never let anyone tell you that something can't be done. Just go out and do it." He paused, then added, "Of course, if I tried to start my company today, it would be completely impossible. Back then, you could just walk into a supermarket with a good idea and start a business. Now you need a good idea and a million dollars."

Toward the end of the concert, as the sky behind the Plaza Hotel grew purple, like a theatre screen, and Tuck & Patti did a Hendrix song called "Castles Made of Sand," a member of the audience was ejected from the garden for barking loudly at the sea lions and making threatening gestures at the crowd. It was clear that he had been trying for many years to live in society and was now quite content with the fact that he was ill-equipped to do so. Tuck & Patti finished up, and we drank some iced tea passed out by Apple & Eve marketeers, and leaned over the pool to contemplate the sea lions. It's an age of conglomeration, we thought—we'll just have to accept that. New Age and jazz, Coke and Nestlé, iced tea and sea lions—they're the sort of disorienting couplings you have to put up with in order to live in what is still the largest capitalist empire in the world. Besides, the iced tea was refreshing, the sea lions were well behaved, and the rain stayed up in the sky. Best of all, we liked Tuck & Patti. They may be the bottled water of the nineties.

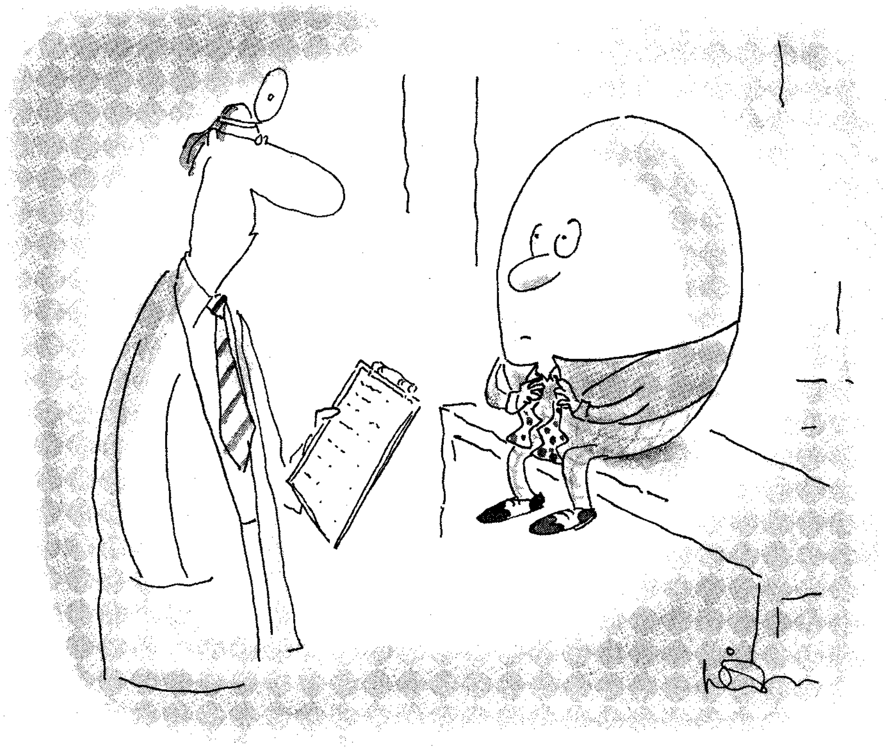
# THIS BED

MY mother has planned her surprise party for eight-thirty tonight, but by two in the afternoon she decides that eight-thirty is all wrong, and she is in a panic. I am pressing my ear against the door of her peeling yellow house in this small New Jersey city. I can hear my sister, Sarah, attempting to provide her with excuses for staying away from the house until eight-thirty, but my mother thinks all her ideas sound too phony. She tells her they wouldn't be having this problem if Sarah had planned the party for seven-thirty like she told her to. I change the position of my ear and close my eyes, hoping to divine other voices, other secrets, but all I hear, of course, is my mother's plaintive voice and my sister's sober one, sounds as familiar to me as the color of this house. I look at my watch again and feel like a guest who has arrived too early.

I ring the bell, and the voices stop. My mother, Frances, opens the door, her face so drawn that it looks about six inches longer than usual. Even the capillaries running across her eyeballs appear irritated. For a second I think she seems surprised to see me; then, as always, I catch her staring at the tiny scar over my right eye, where she struck me with a heavy enamel cup more than thirty years ago. Blood splashed into my eye. Frances shrieked and draped herself over me, as if it had been someone else who pitched the cup across the table and she were protecting me from further harm. The scar is barely visible now—a pale-pink apostrophe in the middle of my eyebrow—but my mother sometimes broods over it as if it were some hieroglyphic, recording all the sins and slights of childhood; at such times I want to turn away, or run, or cover my face.

"You couldn't have come last night?" she says, inhaling so vehemently on her cigarette that her cheeks pucker all the way in.

I actually was planning to fly in last night, but Joni, my girlfriend of the past two years, finally found time to see me after being too busy to return my calls for three weeks. By five this morning, I was wide awake. The sheet had fallen away from Joni, and I stared at her back until she reached down and pulled the sheet up to her neck. Then I laid one hand lightly on her belly, set the other on top of her head, and imagined the sadness of events still to happen: Joni putting her clothes on in the bathroom and silently leaving the apartment; my airplane lifting off in Washington and banging down on the runway in Newark an hour later; my mother opening the door to greet me with a fretful look on her face.



*"I'm afraid you have only three minutes to live."*

"Happy birthday," I say, placing a palm against Frances' face and briefly kissing her.

As I embrace Sarah and press my cheek against hers, feeling the smallness of her body, registering her odors, I wonder, as always, whether we are as close as I like to believe. My sister and I are twins. We share a certain symmetry about our persons, the same hand movements and smile, a similar turn of the head, but at this moment I think Frances and Sarah resemble each other more than Sarah and I do. Both women have the same dazed appearance, as if I had just interrupted them in an act of violence or intimacy.

"Is there a problem here?" I ask.

Sarah explains, "We're just trying to come up with a believable reason for Mom to be out of the house until eight-thirty."

I turn to Frances. "Is that all? I don't think anyone really cares, Mom."

"I care," she declares.

"Mom," Sarah says, "I really think Seth is right about this one. Just say anything. Say you were at the dentist's or the doctor's."

"Sarah, no one comes home from the dentist's at eight-thirty on a Saturday night. Oh, everyone is going to know this whole thing is staged!"

"Mom," I exclaim, "this whole thing *is* staged!"

She gives me a perplexed, annoyed look.

"Listen, Sarah planned this whole event because you wanted her to, and now you're acting like she's trying to ruin your birthday."

Sarah glares at me.

"Is that true, Sarah?" Frances says. "You're doing this only because I want you to? Well, then, you can forget it. Tell the guests anything you want, because all I know is that I wouldn't show up now for all the tea in China."

"Mom, Mom," Sarah pleads. "Seth meant we're doing this because we love you. Right, Seth?"

Both women turn to me. "I have an idea," I reply. "At seven-thirty we'll put my overnight bag in the car, and Mom and I can go somewhere for an hour. Then we can walk in together at eight-thirty, like Mom has just brought me back from the airport.”

A triumphant look transforms my mother’s face. “Oh, yes!” she cries. “Oh, Seth, darling, I can always count on you to save the day!”

FRANCES leaves for her appointment at the beauty parlor. Sarah and I go for a walk with Benny, our mother’s spaniel. Sarah is pulled along in the wake of Benny’s frenzied interest in each frozen turd along the curb. I have to run after them every now and then to catch up. The houses on our street are uniformly small and drab, the patchy yards scattered with overturned tricycles, clotheslines, doghouses, outdoor furniture left to rust. My father bought our modest, yellow Cape Cod thirty-five years ago when he was a resident at a local hospital. I’m sure he planned on buying a grander house after he established his own practice, but one morning he stepped into the street, looked right for some reason, and was hit by a speeding car coming from the other direction.

Only three or four streets from our own, we are in a neighborhood of stately old Tudors and brightly painted Colonials. Benny slows down in front of a white-columned house with a grand, sweeping lawn. He circles a figure of a black jockey that has been here for as long as I can remember.

“Go here, Benny, go here,” I urge from behind a telephone pole.

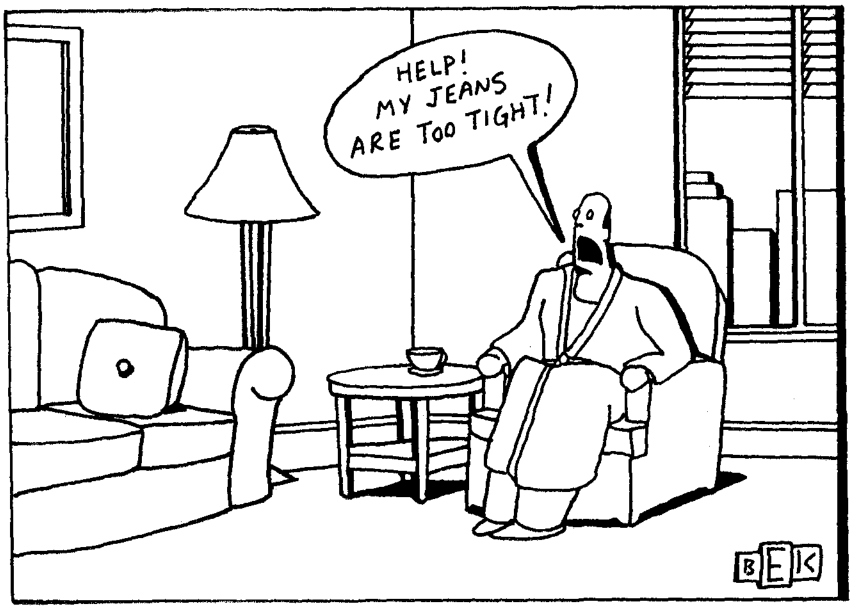
He stops circling and gives me a sorrowful look.

“Go wherever you want,” Sarah says to him.

He pees against the jockey’s ankle and looks up at Sarah.

“Yes, darling, that was wonderful,” Sarah says.

This house belongs to my father’s brother, Leslie, and his wife, Marilyn. Leslie is a gynecologist; Marilyn sells real estate. When Sarah and I were children, Marilyn used to come by in her Lincoln with bags of old clothing, secondhand toys, frozen soup, rye bread, and hot dogs. My mother accepted the charity with chagrin but little protest. Once I overheard her saying that she earned a decent living and didn’t need to be treated as if she were on welfare. “Don’t be so proud,” Marilyn replied, “you have two children and no husband. That’s the same thing as welfare.”


HELP! MY JEANS ARE TOO TIGHT!
BEK

NORMAN STILL HAS SEVENTIES FLASHBACKS SOMETIMES.

• •

If Leslie and Marilyn thought my mother had no cause for pride, it was because of my mother’s love affair with Jimmy Conroy, the principal of the school where my mother has taught second grade for the past thirty-two years. The state of their affair has depended on the vagaries of Mr. Conroy’s relationship with his wife, his six children, and his church. The second time she slept with him, my mother became pregnant. She went to Leslie for help, but he ordered her out of his office, telling her he wasn’t about to risk going to jail on account of her stupidity. After weeks of knocking on back doors and tracking down names in dimly lit hallways, she finally found someone, a doctor in Newark. His office was in a bad neighborhood, but he had diplomas on his walls and everything looked sterile. This would turn out all right, she thought. She could finally get her life back to normal, and she promised herself she would never let anything like this happen again.

I catch up to Sarah and Benny.

“Are you angry at me?” I ask.

“No, not really,” she says.

“I’m sorry if I caused you any grief back at the house.”

“Don’t worry,” she says, with a dismissive laugh. “I’ve been getting grief all weekend. This morning she wanted me to call all the guests again and remind them to be on time. She also can’t decide which outfit to wear, and for some reason that’s my fault, too.”

“Jesus.”

Sarah and I never really get angry at each other, though as children we could fight with a feral energy. For one reason or another—Sarah might brush my arm, or I would be too far over on her side of the car seat—I would place her in a headlock or twist her arm until she shrieked in pain; she retaliated by bending back my fingers and scraping her nails down my face and neck. Frances would watch us in a fit of dismay and grief, like a scientist seeing an experiment going out of control. “Oh, stop! Just stop!” she’d plead, pressing her palms against the sides of her head. Then Sarah and I would let go of each other, both of us suddenly afraid that our mother might unravel, or leave and never come back, as she often threatened to do.

Now we are thirty-five years old, both live alone, have modestly rewarding careers, and are usually courteous and comforting with each other, as if neither one of us wanted to be reminded of how violent we had once been. I live in Washington, D.C., where I write free-lance articles on subjects such as education, toxic shock, migrant laborers. I supplement my income by writing press releases for corporations and foreign governments. I once explained my success in public relations to Sarah by stating, “I’m

# A LECTURE

A certain student in the city of Paris
Coming from countries called Nowhere
Once got a ticket to a lecture
By a famous poet, of the Académie Française.

Duchesses and countesses
In gowns of high fashion
In exquisite coiffures
Were honoring the poet.
They, as everyone knew,
Organized for him those evenings
Attended by every person of distinction.

Paul Valéry looked exactly
Like his photographs:
A close-trimmed mustache,
A clear-eyed, attentive
Boy who had gone gray
And was, as always, quick.

He arranged pages on the table.
His hands were precise.
He read logical sequences
Of main and subordinate clauses,
Discussing permanent features
Of aesthetic experience
That confirm the eternal
Attraction of art.

His listener, that student,
Was busy elsewhere:
His hair stood on end,
His ear caught the screams of a hunt,
He was fleeing across frozen fields
Where behind rimed barbed wire
The miserable souls of his friends
And enemies would remain.

Yet he was clever enough
To admire the poet
For his polite acceptance
Of unpleasant circumstances:
These ladies of good will,
The snobs and their approbation,
The cannibalism and wars
Of his century.

For the speaker only pretended
To be among them, with them.
In fact, sitting in his workshop
He was counting verse syllables.
A servant of architecture,
A grower of crystals,
He shunned the unreasonable
Affairs of mortals.

And alas, alas, it passed—
The rejoicing and weeping,
Believing and despairing,
Debasement and terror.
Wind covered the signs with snow,
The earth took in the screams,
No one anymore remembers
How and when it occurred.

And only the sumptuous, golden
Decasyllabic verse
Lasts and will last for its own
Harmonious reason.
And I, late, am returning
With a shred of bitterness
To his cemetery by the sea
In the always commencing noon.

—CZESLAW MILOSZ

(*Translated, from the Polish, by the author and Robert Hass.*)

• •

master of the art of saying nothing.”

Benny slows down, glancing up at Sarah intermittently.

“You seem very preoccupied,” I say to Sarah.

She draws in a breath and stares at the ground. “I’ve had a job offer . . . in San Francisco.”

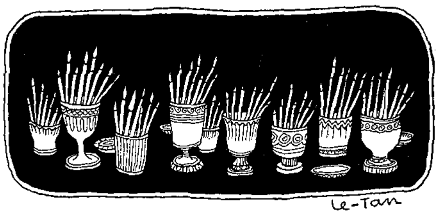
“Really!”

She tells me it’s a job as chairwoman of the English department at a top private school, and at a considerably higher salary than she earns now, teaching at a school in Manhattan. I ask her whether she was actively looking for a job and she says no, not exactly. She met the headmaster of this school at a conference a year ago, and she casually remarked that she had always loved San Francisco. He phoned her a week ago and told her about the opening.

“Sarah, this is all wonderful, don’t you think?”

“I don’t know. My whole life is here.”

Sarah lives in a studio apartment on West Twenty-third Street, spends two weekends a month out here in South Orange with Frances, and occasionally sleeps with Danny, an old high-school boyfriend, who is now married and has two children. She tells me she sees him because he is “safe,” by which I think she means he has no diseases or demands. But when she calls me at three or four in the morning, saying she can’t sleep and asking if I can keep her company over the phone, I know that Danny has just left.



“You might have a nicer life in California,” I say.

“It’s more complicated than that,” she replies, in a tone implying complicated *for me*, perhaps.

“Mom knows?” I ask.

She nods.

“Is this why she’s so agitated?”

“Partially,” she replies. Then she says, “Seth, she’s also upset because you forgot her birthday again.”

“Forgot her birthday? Where am

I now? I'm here for her birthday."

"Today is Saturday. Her birthday was Thursday. She's upset because you didn't call her."

"Because I knew I was coming home today."

"Come on, Seth, you forgot. You forgot last year, too."

"Fine, fine. I'll apologize."

She doesn't respond, and I put my arm through hers.

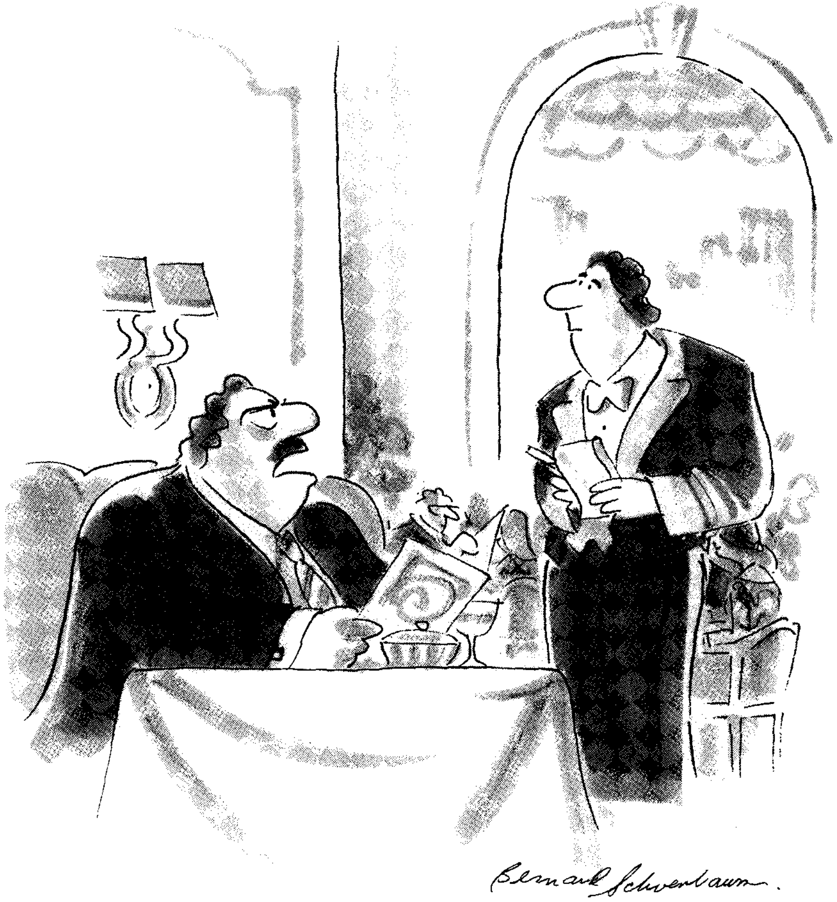
"Do you think Jimmy Conroy might show up tonight?"

"He'll try. I called him this morning. His wife knows about the party, and she's giving him a difficult time."

"Really? You called him and he told you that?"

"Of course," she laughs.

It occurs to me that I might not even recognize Jimmy Conroy if he passed us on the street, and I suddenly panic—I've become a total stranger here; I am still a son and a brother, but I have not returned home in over a year.



*"I'm very angry. What do you suggest?"*

AFTER we come in, I go upstairs to watch a basketball game. The two bedrooms on the second floor belong to Frances and Sarah; I've used the small, panelled room behind the kitchen since I was a teen-ager. The television is in my mother's room, and, lying down on her bed, I am enveloped by her sad, stale odors—the bitter residue of tobacco and the dog's gamy scent. Then I look at the yellowing lace canopy above me, at the beautiful fretwork spiralling down the four posts, and I'm reminded that this bed is the closest thing we have to a family heirloom. This is the bed where my mother was born and where she conceived her own children, the bed she and her husband slept in for the eighteen hundred and thirty-one nights they were married, and the bed she shared with Sarah and me every night for a year after his death. Sarah and I were three, but Frances always went to bed at the same time we did. Encircling both of us in her arms, she hummed lullabies in our ears and in place of a prayer recited the same poem every night:

> Ample make this Bed—
> Make this Bed with Awe—
> In it wait till Judgment break
> Excellent and Fair.

Sometime in the middle of the night she usually rearranged us, shifting around the sheets, toys, and small bodies, softly saying, "Come on, kiddos, ample make this bed."

Now I notice four or five little, black-rimmed holes in the comforter, and I imagine my mother lying on her side, in the dark, the tip of her cigarette beaming on and off all through the night. On my last visit home, I was sleeping in my room downstairs when the scent of a burning cigarette woke me up. I came up to Frances' room to investigate. She and the dog were lying on their sides, backs touching. The television was on, as always, but Frances was staring intently at the ceiling, holding a cigarette to her lips. Directly across the hall the door to Sarah's room was open. She slept with pillows under and over her head. I watched the tip of my mother's cigarette brighten.

"I don't believe this!" I exclaimed.

"What? What?" she replied, as disoriented as if she had been in a deep sleep.

Benny leapt up and began barking at me.

"You're smoking in bed! In the dark! That's what!"

Sarah came out from under a pillow. "What's going on?" she called out in a vague voice.

"Benny, shut up," I shouted. Warbling nervously, he clambered backward over Frances, and, safely ensconced behind her, resumed barking.

"God almighty!" Frances cried out in a highly irritated voice. "The television was on."

"You weren't watching it," I replied. "You were half asleep."

"I was wide awake," she said. "I was thinking."

"Mom, don't you know you were endangering everyone else's life?" I stepped into the hall and put my head into Sarah's room. "Sarah, tell her how dangerous this is."

Sarah pressed the side of her face against one of the pillows. "This is very dangerous," she said in a loud but sleepy monotone.

"Tell her not to do it anymore."

"Don't do it anymore," she said, yawning.

Later in the night I went back up to look in on everything. My mother and Benny were snoring fitfully; the light from a grainy black-and-white movie blanched my mother's face white as a death mask.

Now I hear her tired, heavy steps coming up the stairs and I turn on the television.

"I won't disturb you," she says. "I just have to get some things."

She removes a blue silk skirt and a black cashmere sweater from the closet and, standing before the full-length mirror, holds the outfit in front of her. Her gaze is sad and enigmatic, as if she were seeing her entire life in the mirror.

She notices me watching her and asks how I like the outfit.

"Great, fine," I say, and immediately hope she doesn't hear how these words are laced with anger.

She turns around and faces me. "Is something wrong?"

"No, nothing," I say. "You'll look great."

"Well, I'm sixty years old," she says to the mirror.

"You still have a lot of years left," I say, "if you don't set this bed on fire." I point to the holes in the comforter. "You promised me you weren't going to smoke in bed anymore."

"Oh, that's from a long time ago," she replies, lighting a cigarette and returning the things to the closet. She brings out a white silk blouse and a black skirt, holds them in front of her, then looks at herself in profile. "Oh, I can't decide," she says.

I tell her I like the other outfit.

She retrieves the first one again and studies it closely, brushing the skirt with the back of her hand.

"So how's your girlfriend?" she says. "Joni? Is that her name?"

"Joni. Right. She's great."

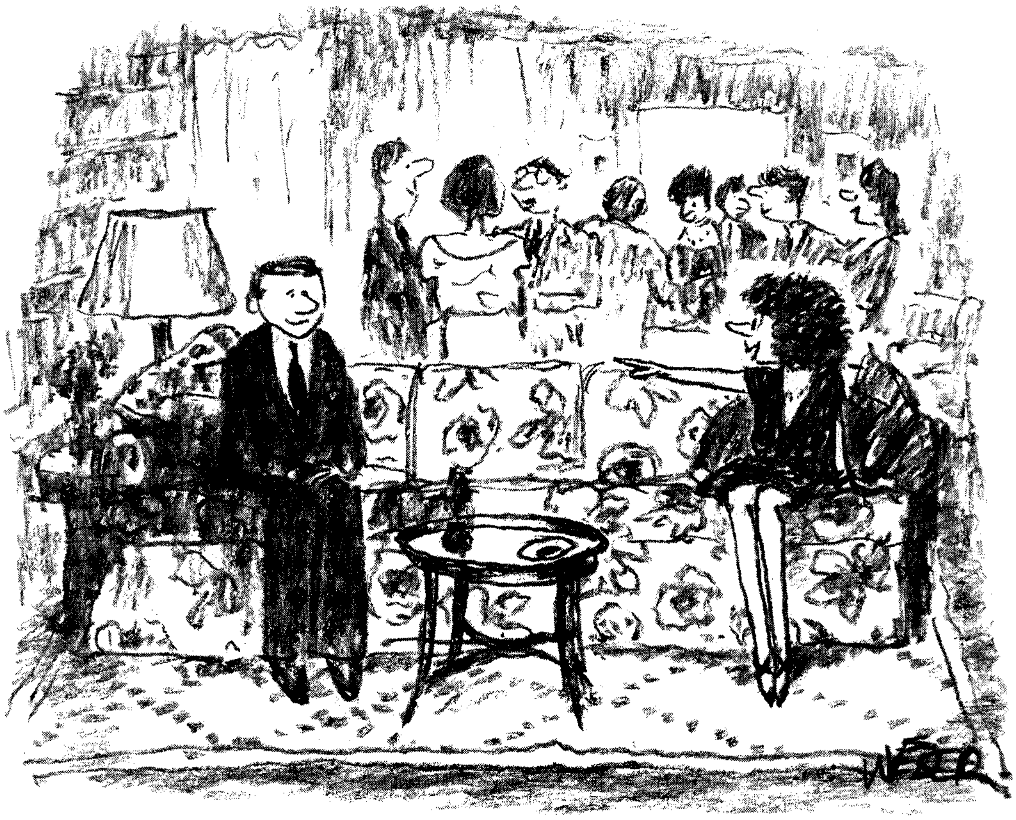
"You could have brought her, you know." She pinches her face in various places and then lightly touches her hair with her palm.

"I hear Mr. Conroy might be coming tonight," I say, thinking that this is also the bed in which the two of them have spent perhaps thousands of afternoons. I've always marvelled that she can push away all her history and habits as if they were an extra sheet and receive him in this bed.

"Oh, who knows?" she says. "If he comes, he comes—that's my attitude."

"Well, I think that's the right attitude to have," I say. She usually refers very obliquely to her relationship with Jimmy Conroy, even though it has been common knowledge among her friends and colleagues for fourteen or fifteen years. I have known they were lovers since I was thirteen. I heard them come in late one evening and kiss for a long time, and when my mother sang out, "Oh, Jimmy, Jimmy, I love you, too," it was as if I had learned a fact about the world that I had always known in my heart. I knew because some mornings the scent of his Vitalis blended richly with my mother's heavy perfume in our car; I knew because in the lunchroom he inquired about my day with extra kindness, placing a hand on my back; and when he appeared in our bedroom late one night, gently waking us up, telling us that our mother was in the hospital but she would be fine, we didn't need to be scared, I knew that all this was happening because Mr. Conroy in some way loved my mother.

Frances returns the outfit to the closet. She stands before the bureau, one hand on her hip, meditatively twisting out her cigarette. She comes over and sits in the chair by the bed, looking at me. I brace myself, expecting the familiar refrain about whether she was a bad mother and is that why I don't call on her birthday and come to visit more often.



*"I find the defendant guilty of stealing that shy little smile from Kevin Costner."*

"Sweetheart, did you happen to go through a box of old things in my closet?"

"A box of old things?" I repeat, though I know perfectly well the box she is referring to. It was labelled "Memories," and inside it were old diaries, photographs, birth and death certificates, and hundreds of letters. I found the box on my last visit home when Frances and Sarah were out for the afternoon. I'm not sure if I was searching for anything in particular, but, being alone in the house, I felt an odd license to trespass and ruminate, and when I found this box I read through everything as if the contents of my mother's life formed a novel I couldn't put down. Her story was familiar enough to me, but each yellowed page offered a small surprise—her thrill at discovering a rare pink lady's slipper in the woods, or the electric shiver she felt in college when some boy simply touched her wrist.

"You know," she says, "letters, photographs, personal things."

I did remove one page from an old journal. Could she have noticed it was missing?

"No, Mom. I didn't go through any box."

"Oh, well. I was just wondering."

I know she is just wondering, and might not be angry if I confessed. But I wouldn't know how to explain myself—either the violation or the interest.

"I'm sorry I didn't phone you on your birthday, Mom."

"Did Sarah say something to you?"

"Who?" I say, smiling slightly.

She laughs timorously, kisses me on the forehead, then goes downstairs.

I COME downstairs an hour later. Sarah has put up multicolored balloons and banners. The two women are sitting at the kitchen table, where Sarah is doing Frances' makeup. My mother stares ahead as Sarah, inches from her face, delicately combs her lashes. Frances appears serene, deeply calmed by Sarah's hands. I keep still, transfixed by the beauty and mystery of Sarah's ministrations; and I realize that this is the life my sister was referring to—not her apartment, her job, or Danny. Sarah pulls back to regard her handiwork. Frances' eyes flutter, like someone coming out of hypnosis. I cough casually and say, "Excuse me, but I think it's time to go get me at the airport."

In the car I suggest we stop somewhere for a cup of coffee. My mother says she'd prefer to drive around for an hour.

"You don't want to go anywhere? You just want to drive?"

"Why not? I do it all the time."

Sometimes, when she had an especially bad time sleeping, my mother drove all night, occasionally ending up in places like Pittsburgh or Norfolk at six or seven in the morning. Several years ago, she and the dog showed up at my door in Washington early one morning. I put on some coffee and apologized repeatedly for the state of the apartment. I could hear how stilted my voice sounded. The floor was covered with manuscript pages, open books, newspapers, socks, underwear. Three or four day's worth of dishes were tipping over in the sink.

"Looks like you've been pretty busy," she said, as Benny brandished a sock.

"Pretty busy." But of course she could see the chaotic condition of my life, just as I could see that her face was lined with exhaustion and age. I wanted to ask her to spend the day, but I knew my facial muscles were signalling her to leave.

"Well, I'm going soon," she said. "I'll just call Jimmy so he can cover for me this morning."

"Don't you want to nap for a couple of hours? You look like you haven't slept for ages."

"No, I'll be fine. If I get sleepy I'll pull over and close my eyes."

I suddenly pictured her sleeping along the side of the highway, her head tilted back against the car seat, her mouth wide open, and a cigarette burning in the ashtray. People driving by might think she was dead.

"Sweetheart, really, I'll be fine. I love to watch the light change when I drive all night. The Capitol turns this beautiful shade of pink when the sun is coming up."

FRANCES gets on the highway now, driving east toward the airport. We are silent for many minutes; she keeps glancing at the side and rearview mirrors.

"Seth, look," she says finally. "I want you to understand something about Jimmy and me. We knew each other for seven years before we acted on our feelings."

"That's all right, Mom," I say uncertainly.

"I always wondered if you thought I was—well, you know, wanton or irresponsible, because of my relationship with him."

"Wanton? Of course not! Why would I think something like that?"

"You can be very disapproving sometimes."

"Mom, I never knew anything was going on anyway."

She looks at me in the rearview mirror, deciding whether to believe me.

"Jimmy was very kind to me the year or two after your father died. I went back to teaching only a few months after his accident. I wasn't ready for it, but I had no choice. I still couldn't get out of bed some mornings, but Jimmy would always step in for me. God, I remember one day I just put my head down on the desk and cried uncontrollably in front of all my second graders. The next thing I knew, Jimmy was standing over me. He had his hand on my back and was telling the children I was feeling a little sad that morning but I would be all right in a couple of minutes.”

Her voice suddenly becomes choked, a knot of love or memory catching in her throat.

“Mom, really, it’s all right. You don’t have to explain. I’m glad that Mr. Conroy’s been in your life.”

“You don’t understand,” she says. “In my day a woman didn’t do something like that—sleep with a married man—especially if she had two children of her own. I thought I was being decent and careful by waiting so many years.”

“Mom, let up on yourself. It’s your birthday. Remember?”

She leans slightly forward over the steering wheel, trying to gauge some point at a vague distance.

“I’m sorry we’re not close,” she says quietly.

“Mom, please. We are close.” I’d like to say something more convincing, and for a moment I consider confessing that I went through her journals. “You’re really close to Sarah, too, Mom. You’re both lucky to have each other.”

“Do you think I love her more than I love you?”

“No, of course not! I mean, you’re closer to Sarah, but I don’t think you love her more.”

She accepts this reply silently, like an answer to a factual question.

“You’ll always have Sarah, Mom. Even if she moves to San Francisco.”

“She told you?”

“She still hasn’t decided. She might not go.”

“She *better* go. I’ve told her not to stay here on my account.”

Frances turns off the highway and negotiates a maze of ramps and arteries to reverse our direction. The landscape is complexly ugly, a netherworld of refineries, power stations, swamps, bridges, and low, toxic hills over which seagulls slowly circle.

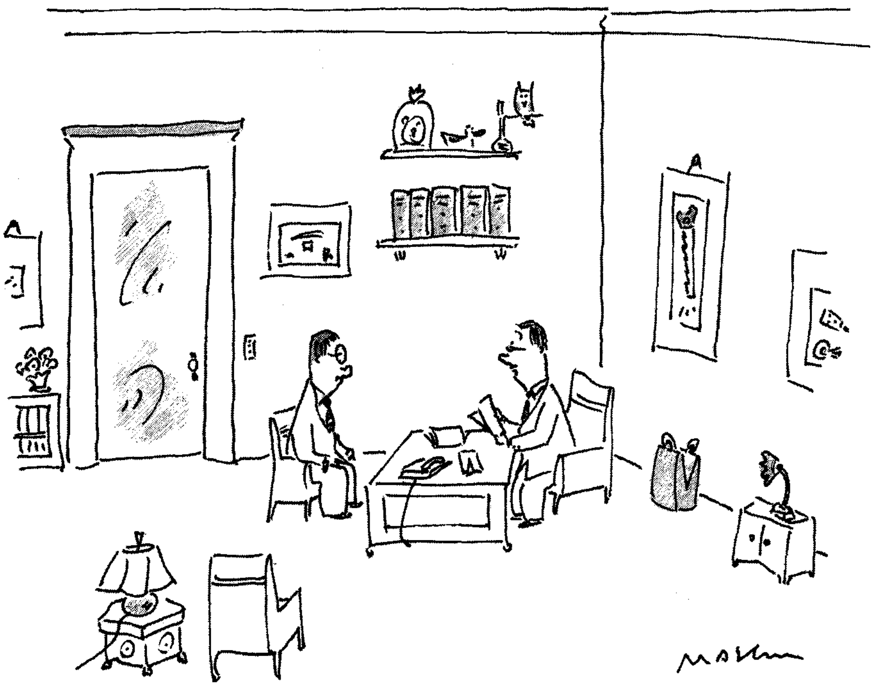
“You really know your way around here,” I say. “I’d be afraid of getting lost and ending up in the middle of nowhere.”

She considers this remark for a second or two, then replies, “Thanks.”

CARS are lined up all along our street. My mother looks into the rearview mirror and says she is embarrassed to go into the house because her eyes are so red. I tell her she looks fine, not to worry about it. We get out of the car and shut the doors loudly. All the lights go off inside the house.

We are showered with shouts and lights and confetti. Perhaps fifteen people are here, old friends and colleagues of my mother’s. Frances’ eyes are brimming with fresh tears, as if the surprise were real.

“Oh, my!” she cries. “Oh, my! We just came from the airport.” I try to stand slightly behind her, but she puts her arm around my waist and presses her forehead against my shoulder.



“As part of the settlement, your wife is asking for any three of the six letters of your surname. You, of course, would retain the remaining three.”

“How do you like this son of mine? He worked all day in Washington, and then he ran to the airport so he could get home for his mother’s birthday.”

I try to smile naturally, to look like the son she has just described, but I’m afraid I have the coy demeanor of someone receiving a prize he never asked for.

Marilyn and Leslie come over to greet us. Both are fit and tanned; they have just returned from their yearly golf vacation in Hawaii.

“How’s the birthday girl?” Leslie says, regarding Frances over the top of his spectacles. Then he asks me if I’m still free-lancing. “Still trying to save the world?” he adds.

I tell him that I now work for a public-relations company, too.

“Any money in that?” Leslie asks.

“Millions,” I reply.

“Say, you didn’t really just come from the airport,” Marilyn says to me.

I look at Frances, who appears alarmed and nervous.

“Certainly I did,” I reply.

“I’m sure I saw you and Sarah pass by the house with the dog today.”

I put my hand on her forehead. “Marilyn, have you been feeling all right?”

Sarah drapes her arm around me in a show of sisterly love; then, without anyone noticing, she pinches me painfully.

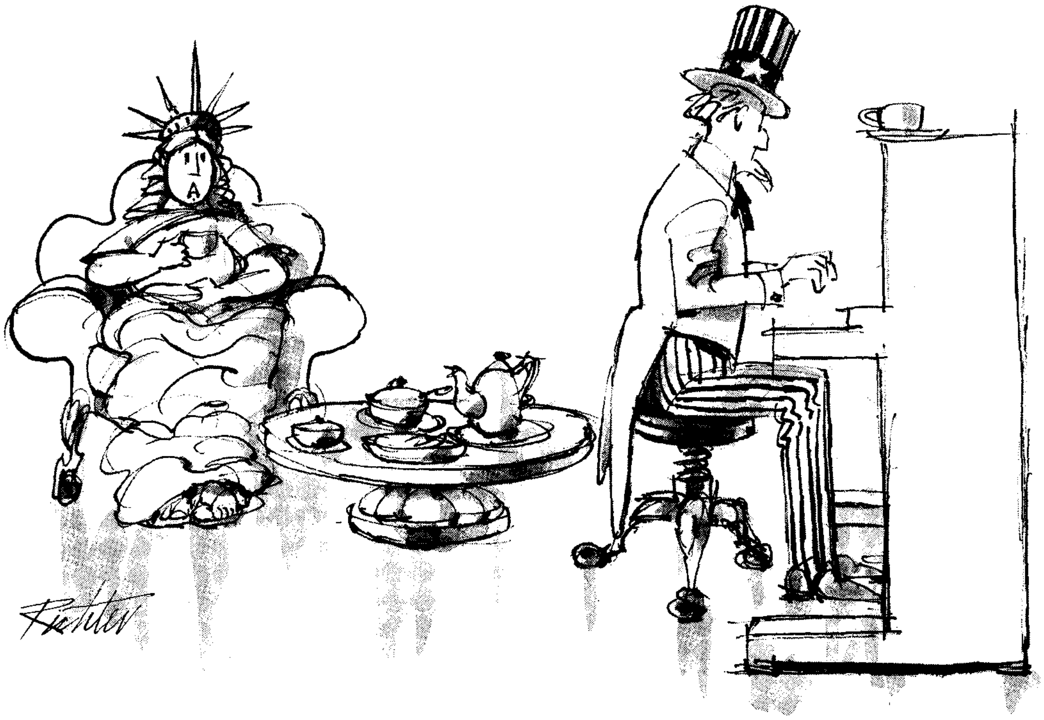
“Sarah,” Marilyn says, “please don’t let the dog go to the bathroom on my statuary.”

“Sorry, Aunt Marilyn,” she says.

Sarah says she has to attend to things in the kitchen. I scan the room and make eye contact with Rosemary Campo, my mother’s colleague, best friend, and travelling companion. Usually they go to London for a week over Christmas and rent a house together on the Jersey shore in August; this Christmas they went on a grand tour of Italy, paid for with the five thousand dollars Rosemary won with one pull of a lever in an Atlantic City casino.

She dramatically waves me over.

“Nice to see you, doll,” she says, giving me a hearty embrace.



*"Play it, Sam."*

• •

I tell her it's nice to see her, too.

"Yes, I noticed you wanted to get away from Dr. and Mrs. Know-It-All."

"Thanks for rescuing me," I laugh. "I hope you're not becoming serene. The last time I saw you they were 'Dr. and Mrs. Heads-Up-Their-Asses.' "

"The last time I saw you was over a year ago. Where have you been?"

"Just busy, I guess."

"Yeah, yeah, you're busy. So are you too busy to drive down to Atlantic City with Frances and me tomorrow morning?"

"Maybe. Can I think about it?"

She places a hand on my wrist. "I promise you won't die from it."

I put my hand over hers and raise it up. "Is this the lucky arm?" I ask. She catches my fleeting look down at her bosom; she'd had surgery a year before.

"Can't even tell it's missing, can you?"

"No."

"The *Register* did a story on my big win. I told Frances the headline should have said 'ONE-TIT TEACHER BEATS ONE-ARMED BANDIT.' " She laughs loudly and then looks away from me.

"Rosemary," I say.

"I'm going to be fine, doll." She is still gazing out over the room when her lower lip and the pouch beneath her chin begin to tremble.

"Rosemary, I'm really so sorry."

She turns to me and says, "Did you know that your mother slept on a chair in my hospital room every night for a week?" She composes herself by pressing her lips together and closing her eyes; then she says, "Frances is very lucky to have you and Sarah." Rosemary catches Frances' attention and waves her over.

"Guess what?" Rosemary says to her. "Seth is coming with us to Atlantic City."

"Oh, what a wonderful, wonderful idea!" my mother exclaims, her face a high, exuberant color. "Oh, but Sarah's coming, too. Who's going to stay with Benny?"

"Frances, dear, for one day in your life don't worry about Benny." Rosemary kneels down and holds her drink out to the dog. He dips his tongue in it experimentally. "Look," she says. "He loves vodka. We'll pour some in his water bowl in the morning, and he'll sleep like a baby all day."

I LOCATE Sarah in the kitchen. She is rinsing glasses in the sink.

"What happened between you and Mom in the car?" she says.

"Nothing. Why?"

"She looked very drawn when you came in."

"She always looks drawn."

I gulp down more champagne.

"Don't you think you ought to go a little easy on that?"

I look into my empty cup, as if it might provide an answer to her question.

"Sarah, I'm sorry, but I never know the right thing to say to her."

"Tell her you love her," she implores me. "She just wants to hear you say it."

Marilyn puts her head inside the kitchen door. "So?" she says conspiratorially.

"So, what?" I reply.

She glances back into the living room, as if spies might be shadowing her. Then she steps into the kitchen holding a plate weighed down with ribs and tortellini.

"So where's your mother's boyfriend?"

"You mean Mr. Conroy?"

"Right, right. Him."

"He called and said he'll come if he can," I reply.

"Well, I'm not holding my breath. I've tried to introduce your mother to some very nice men, but is she interested? Of course not."

"Aunt Marilyn," I say, "the last man you introduced her to had one foot in the grave."

"Who? Mr. Pearlman? He's a wonderful man. He would have been very nice company for your mother."

"How old was he? Seventy-seven? Seventy-eight?"

"Look, at her age, your mother can't be too particular."

"Oh, well, maybe you can fix her up with Boaz, then," I say.

Boaz is a twenty-seven-year-old Israeli fitness instructor at Marilyn's health club. She had given him Sarah's phone number. Sarah felt sorry for him when he called, so she agreed to go out with him. He came to her apartment on a frigid January evening wearing a light leather jacket and a shirt opened nearly to his navel. Enchained around his neck was a plate of gold letters which read "Damn I'm Good."

"Boaz is a very nice boy," Marilyn

says. "Didn't he ever call you again, Sarah?"

"He was very nice, Aunt Marilyn," Sarah replies. "We just didn't have anything in common."

"He's nice, you're nice. I don't know what you're waiting for, Sarah. You're thirty-five already. If you keep up this 'we don't have anything in common' business, it's going to be too late. You'll end up just like your mother."

"What's so bad about ending up like my mother?" I say.

She appears genuinely dumbfounded by this question. "Look, all these years she's been carrying on with a married man. Everyone in that living room knows about them. How she can live like that I'll never understand."

"Is that all you can say about our mother, Marilyn?" I reply. "She's raised two children. She's taught hundreds of other children to read. She's loving and generous. She has friends who value her. But all you two ever do is treat her like her entire life is one big embarrassment."

"Say, look here, I only want what's best for your mother, you know that."

"Like hell you do," I say.

The lines of her mouth go rigid; then she bangs open the door and returns to the living room.

Sarah turns to the sink, gripping the sides of it, her back shuddering.

"Sarah?" I touch her shoulder, and she turns to me. "I'm so happy you're here," she says, pressing her wet cheek against my neck and holding me more tightly than anyone has held me for a long time.

THE lights go down, and a chorus of "Happy Birthday" goes up, as Sarah and I come out of the kitchen bearing the candlelit cake, which looks like a small field of swaying fire. We put it down and move off to one side, but Frances pulls us both over, and we lean into the heat and brightness of the flames. "One, two, three," my mother says, and we exhale in unison, one capacious breath sending the fire sputtering and lurching. Frances runs out of breath and Sarah and I race to blow out the remaining candles. Both of us are bent over, laughing, gasping. The doorbell rings, freezing everyone for a moment. Then I reach for my drink and swill it down.

Someone opens the door and accepts a delivery of thirty-six roses. People comment on their splendor and beauty as they are handed up to my mother. She looks a little embarrassed by so many flowers, by this extravagance of love and regret. She reads the card that accompanies them, and I notice a chain reaction of yearning pass from one guest to another, everyone joined together in a silent prayer for Frances' happiness, everyone secretly encouraging her. She puts the flowers down and smiles bravely. Rosemary unfolds a T-shirt emblazoned with the word "SUPERTEACHER" and signed by Frances' twenty-eight second graders. She praises my mother's diligence in teaching for thirty-two years. She estimates that comes to nearly one thousand students, "Or about two thousand shoes that needed lacing at one time or another." Everyone applauds as my mother dramatically kneads her lower back. More salutations and gifts are sent her way: a pair of earrings, theatre tickets, a silk scarf, an engraved cigarette lighter. Marilyn and Leslie give her a five-hundred-dollar gift certificate to Lord & Taylor. Sarah hands up her present. Frances reads the card and says, "Oh, honey, that's beautiful. Just beautiful. Can I read this out loud?"

Sarah nods and my mother reads: "Dear Mom, I can't give you anything that you don't already have. I can only return some of the gifts you have shared with me. I love you. Sarah." She opens Sarah's present, a leather-bound edition of Edna St. Vincent Millay's collected poems. She spends a minute paging through the book before she locates the poem she wants. She reads to everyone:

> My candle burns at both ends;
> It will not last the night;
> But, ah, my foes, and, oh, my friends—
> It gives a lovely light!

I silently accompany her reading, for I remember her reciting this poem many times to Sarah and me. My mother reaches over some empty boxes and squeezes Sarah's hand. Behind me, I hear Marilyn whisper to Leslie, "Is that the whole poem?"

I stand up and hand my mother the present I have brought with me, an antique amethyst brooch. She opens the case and holds the brooch up like a small trophy, and I realize everyone is waiting for me to say something. I raise my Dixie cup and look at my mother's expectant face; I want to tell her that I hold her entire history in my heart, that I can sometimes feel her pains and reveries as if they were my own, but I don't have my sister's gift for telling her all that I know and long for. "To a wonderful Mom. . . ." Then, in a rush, I add, "Thanks for all your lovely light." I rapidly drain my champagne and put my arm around Frances to let our guests know the speech is over.

Everyone applauds, but I am feeling dizzy and make my way upstairs. The bed in Sarah's room is covered with coats, so I go lie down in Frances'

"Well, I reigned today, but not supreme."

room. I put a pillow over my head, afraid that in a couple of minutes the room is going to begin revolving, the bed spinning faster and faster.

I feel a hand on my foot. Lifting the pillow, I see Sarah standing by the bed with a cup of coffee. "I thought you might need this," she says.

I lean back against the headboard, sipping. "I guess Mr. Conroy isn't coming," I say.

Frances' laughter rises up to us above the din. "Doesn't sound as if she's very upset about it," Sarah says.

"Actually, we were discussing him in the car. Mom was concerned I thought she was *wanton*."

"Wanton?" Sarah replies, incredulous.

"That's the word she used. Can you believe it?" I set down my cup.

"The sad thing is she probably believes it. She's slept with two men in sixty years. God, I had slept with four boys by the time I was eighteen."

"Yeah, that's what I told her."

She laughs and conks me on the head with a pillow. "She told me she felt a hundred times better after hearing that," I say, grabbing her wrist and placing her in a light headlock.

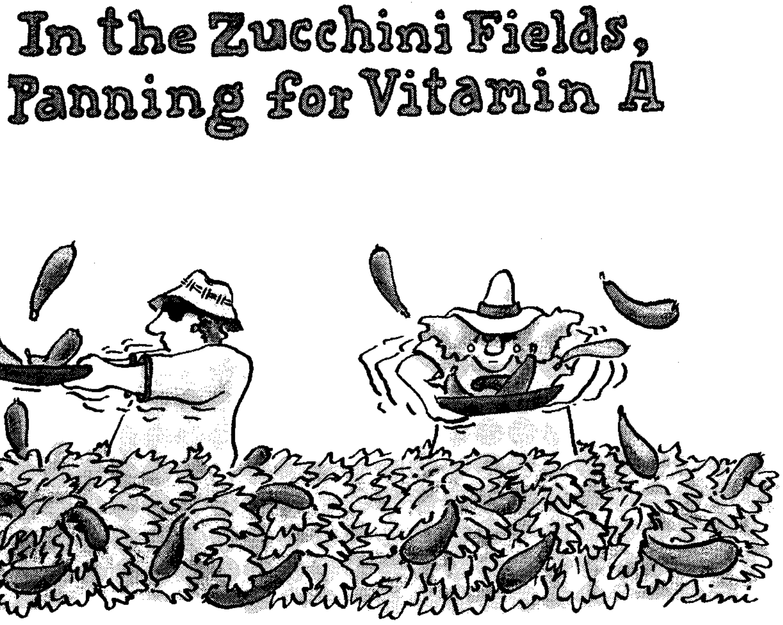
"Shut up, shut up," she laughs, freeing herself and clamping her hand over my mouth. I pull her hand away and kiss it. Then we both lean against the headboard. Sarah tilts her head against my shoulder. I keep hold of her hand.

"Sarah?"

"Yes?"

"I don't think I'd recognize Jimmy Conroy if I saw him on the street."

"Sweetie, don't worry about it."


In the Zucchini Fields, Panning for Vitamin A

I am thinking of the time he appeared in our bedroom to tell us that our mother was in the hospital, not because it is my last vivid memory of him, but because I realized that night how completely I loved my sister. Our mother's abortion had not turned out all right. She began to hemorrhage in the car when she was driving home. She phoned Jimmy from her bed, telling him to call an ambulance and to take Sarah and me to our aunt and uncle's. We sat at opposite ends of the spacious back seat in Mr. Conroy's station wagon during the brief ride to their house, and my sister—who usually never let a tear come to her eye, even when I socked her in the back or yanked her ear—was crying hysterically. Her tears had begun when we saw the bloodstained carpet outside our mother's bedroom, and continued after Marilyn put us to sleep in her guest room in two single beds on opposite sides of a night table. Sarah was crying more quietly by then—an eerie, rhythmic moaning. Then I heard her choke out my name. I lay very still, my heart vibrating. She said my name again, keening it, pleading. I put my feet on the floor, which felt as strange as the surface of the moon, and climbed in next to her. She put her arms around me, and I could feel her body heaving with grief, as if she knew our mother would not recover. I held my sister for perhaps an hour, until she fell asleep, and then I returned to my own bed.

I squeeze her hand now, pressing this memory into her, this knowledge that we are deeply and mysteriously connected.

"I bet you're not going to California," I say.

"That's not a very daring bet," she laughs.

"Maybe I'm not as daring or brave as you and Mom."

"Oh, you have your moments," she replies. She brushes my hair back and leaves the room, telling me not to stay away from the party for long. I can hear how lively the celebration has become. My mother's voice is especially clear and close, rising above the general hum of the crowd, rising up to me as it did that night when I heard her sing out, "Oh, Jimmy, Jimmy, I love you." I was secretly thrilled to hear her words, to know she had a life other than the one I saw every day. I know that in three hours everyone will be gone, and she'll be lying in this bed, her cigarette gleaming on and off through the night. But I imagine her standing in the back yard, in her bathrobe, one bright spring morning over thirty-five years ago. On the page I took from her old journal she'd said this was the happiest morning of her life. The date was April 5, 1957, two days before she gave birth to Sarah and me, three years before her husband died, years before she fell in love with Jimmy Conroy, before she struck me with a cup, before she combed the streets of Newark in search of an abortionist, before she almost bled to death in her bed. She and our father had moved into the house only in March, and for weeks the weather was dull and leaden; old drifts of gray snow remained on the ground until late in the month. But by April 5th, a scatter of wild yellow crocuses had pushed up through the grass. The clear morning air vibrated with the trilling of birds. Frances stood in the middle of the yard, overjoyed to finally feel the heat of the sun on her face. She stepped out of her wet slippers, set her feet wide apart to accommodate her girth, and shuddered from a series of our convulsive kicks inside her. She squeezed the ground between her toes and cradled her belly; her fingertips slowly navigated its entire surface. All was well: all wondrous and alive.

—Adam Schwartz

# A REPORTER AT LARGE

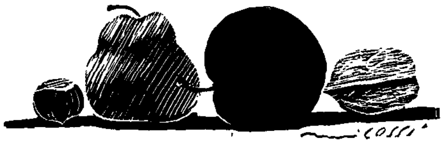
## A TEHERAN SPRING

THE dusty highway south from Teheran runs through barren countryside, until, some fifteen kilometres from the city's edge, an enormous gold dome looms on the horizon. Even in the spring, the heat rising off the surrounding desert makes it shiver like a mirage. Two spiny minarets quiver rhythmically alongside it. The route is among the most heavily travelled in Iran; Teheranis say that everyone has to make the trip at least once. The road leads to Behesht-e Zahra, or "Zahra's Paradise," the Muslim cemetery. The last time I took it, in the summer of 1988, the way was clogged with funeral processions—busload after busload of families journeying to bury the latest "martyrs" in the costly eight-year war with Iraq. This April, however, traffic was light. The only splashes of color on the bleak road to the gold dome were small batches of the year's first flowers, sold along the roadside by young boys from Teheran's poor southern suburbs, and green road signs, in Farsi and English, directing visitors to "Imam Khomeini's Holy Tomb."

Built by Iran's ruling mullahs after Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini's death, in June of 1989, the tomb is the largest and most ornate shrine to a Shiite leader anywhere in the world, and one of the largest to any Muslim leader since the faith was founded, in the seventh century. Disgruntled Iranians complain that its cost was greater than the annual budget of Teheran, a city of almost thirteen million people. Devout Iranians, however, boast that it is finer than either the Grand Mosque in Mecca or the Prophet Muhammad's tomb in Medina—Islam's holiest sites. Their message is implicit.

The entrance to the tomb is across a vast plaza, complete with a reflecting pool and taps at which the faithful dutifully wash before praying. Inside the entrance are two rooms, lined to the ceiling with gray cubbyholes, where visitors check their shoes. The main room, a vast space lined with pillars and lit by several chandeliers, is indeed magnificent. The floor and walls are polished marble, which reflects the sparkling light of the chandeliers and gives the interior an airy feeling. Persian carpets—of handwoven silks in richly textured designs from various Iranian provinces—adorn the floor. In the center, beneath the gold dome, is a cagelike glass-and-silvery-metal chamber, canopied in green, the color of Islam. Inside, the Ayatollah lies beneath a marble slab, which is also covered by a green cloth. The metal was used in part to prevent the large crowds that once assembled here from breaking through to the Imam; the faithful still shudder at the memory of the chaos at his funeral, when the shrouded body was uncovered and tossed around by mourners vying for a last look or touch. On each of the chamber's four sides, at eye level, is a slit through which to pass money. On the day I was there, rial notes were piled at least two feet high around the edges of the chamber. Stained-glass windows at the base of the gold dome depict giant red tulips with green leaves—in Iran, the red tulip is the symbol of martyrdom—incongruously fashioned in the simple modernistic style of New York City's Big Apple.

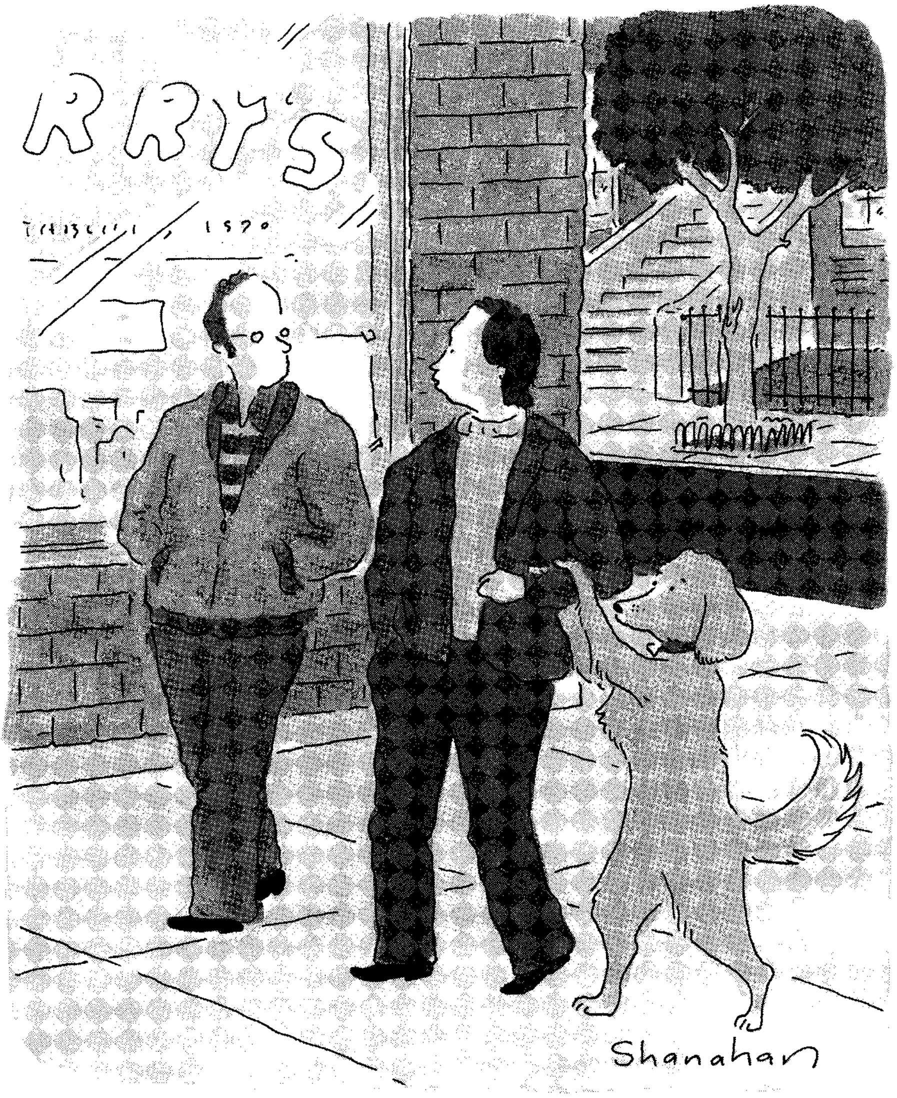
For all its splendor, the tomb is a place of unusual informality, and non-Muslims and foreigners are welcome. Out of either reverence or curiosity, almost everyone who enters heads immediately for Khomeini's chamber. As I peered inside it, a small middle-aged woman next to me wept softly, reciting a prayer and touching the metal with rough, henna-stained hands. Then, having paid her respects, she walked over to join a group having a picnic lunch. Throughout the tomb's cavernous interior, groups were spread out on the carpets, eating or chatting, while children played tag or raced to slide across the marble floor in their stocking feet; two boys were kicking around a small soccer ball. Families lined up to have their pictures taken against the backdrop of the burial chamber. Several loners—mainly, but not exclusively, men—were curled up against a wall, napping. The casualness does not indicate a lack of reverence: death and mourning are celebrated among devout Shiite Muslims as a part of life. On my earlier visit to the cemetery, I had witnessed similar scenes at the graves of war martyrs and of ordinary Iranians in adjacent fields. Still, the informality was a contrast to the desperate throes of grief displayed three years ago, at the time of the Imam's death.



Outside, the atmosphere was almost festive. A row of outdoor cafés on the plaza offered an assortment of sweet delicacies. Across the plaza, souvenir kiosks sold T-shirts, beach towels, posters of Khomeini and other prominent mullahs, and cassette tapes—in Farsi, English, French, German, and Arabic—of the Ayatollah's last will and testament. Like the crumpled rials inside the burial chamber, the proceeds will be used to expand the complex. The government plans to construct a university for Islamic studies, a seminary, hotels for pilgrims, and a shopping mall across some five thousand acres, at a projected cost of at least two and a half billion dollars. The tomb will eventually become the center of a suburb, with its own metro stop.

For a weekend afternoon, the tomb was lightly populated—roughly two hundred people in a place that could clearly hold thousands. The count went up when a class of pre-teen girls, just old enough to don the required head scarf and body covering of Islamic modesty, filed in with their teachers. Another hundred or so people were outside on the plaza. The tea-men at one of the cafés told me that the tomb was still swamped with visitors on holidays and revolutionary anniversaries, and during various pilgrimages. "Too many," one said proudly. But a young Iranian woman, overhearing our conversation, took me aside and said, in a hushed voice, "Believe me, the revolution is like this shrine. It's a luxury. And people in this country don't have time for luxuries anymore."

I VISITED Khomeini's resting place on the eve of Iran's pivotal election for the Majlis, its unicameral parlia-



*"She never took to the leash."*

• •

ment—the fourth parliament since the country's 1979 revolution. Parliamentary elections in Iran differ significantly from those in other parts of the world; in the Middle East, they are unique. All citizens fifteen years of age and older, including women, are eligible to vote. Fifty-six women—a record number—were among the candidates. This year's campaign lasted a mere eight days. In part because of the high number of candidates—more than two thousand ran for the parliament's two hundred and seventy seats—none were allowed to buy advertising on television or radio. Posters for individual candidates were limited to a size slightly larger than a piece of legal paper. The standard format was a picture (all the female candidates wore the black chador, and thus looked alike) with a few lines about the candidate's educational and professional background, followed by endorsements from religious or cultural groups. Campaigning was strictly on the issues; Teheran's public prosecutor sternly warned the press against writing about the candidates' personal lives.

As has become the norm since 1979, most campaigning was conducted at mosques or other Islamic gathering places; the candidates sat on the floor with their constituents, presented their platforms, and then answered questions. The religious minorities—Jews, Armenian Christians, Assyrian and Chaldean Christians, and Zoroastrians, whose faith prevailed in Iran before Islam—are represented proportionately in the Majlis, and their candidates campaigned at synagogues, churches, and temples. (The Baha'i, who broke away from Shiite Islam in the nineteenth century and are persecuted as heretics, are the only minority excluded from Majlis representation; at least two hundred Baha'i have been executed since 1979, most of them in the revolution's early years.)

But this spring's election—the first since the war's end, in August of 1988, and the death of the Ayatollah—was unlike any earlier contest. Since the mid-nineteen-eighties, the ruling mullahs have been increasingly divided over the future of the revolution. The rift briefly became visible to the outside world during the disastrous 1985-86 arms-for-hostages swap with the United States, when one group of clerics dealt secretly with the Great Satan and the other exposed them. By 1987, the in-house squabbling had grown so serious that the Ayatollah finally agreed to dissolve the Islamic Republic Party, under whose banner the mullahs had united to purge their leftist and centrist partners in the revolution and to consolidate power in the world's only modern theocracy.

Until his death, Khomeini served as a balance between the two camps, reining in whichever side went too far, and always counselling unity; after he died, the division became a fact of life, though not of official debate. The Iranian government still deplores the terms "factions," "hard-liners," and "moderates," and officials regularly denounce them as "arrogant" and "spiteful" foreign propaganda, as if by denying the words they could deny the differences. The preferred term for the factions is "tendencies," but they are effectively the embryos of new parties. In one of many signals that this year marks a turning point for Iran, both sides formally came out into the open for the Majlis election.

The split was visible even at Khomeini's tomb. On a pole in front of the complex, the Association of Combatant Clerics, or Majmae Ruhaniyoun-e Mobarez, had posted a large roster of its Teheran candidates, neatly written out in red, green, and white, the colors of the revolution and its flag. The Ruhaniyoun, as it is usually referred to, is made up of the hard-line mullahs and their supporters, who believe they most closely adhere to "the Imam's line." It includes many of the revolution's most controversial figures, among them Hojatoleslam Sadeq Khalkhali, nicknamed "the hanging judge," for the death sentences he imposed after summary trials in the revolution's early years; Mohammad Ibrahim Asgharzadeh, the spokesman for the students who held the fifty-two American hostages between 1979 and 1981; Hojatoleslam Mohammad Musavi Khoeiniha, the mullah who blessed the United States Embassy takeover; and Hojatoleslam Ali Akbar Mohtashami, the former Interior Minister and Ambassador to Syria. "The hard-liners look to the past for ideas to use as the framework for modernization," an Iranian journalist told me. The Ruhaniyoun advertised at the tomb because its main constituency is the *mostazafin*, or "downtrodden"—the poor and traditionally pious, many of whom live in the crowded suburbs closest to the tomb and still take the time to visit it.

With typical and confusing Iranian subtlety, the other "tendency" is called the Society of Radical Clergy, or Jameye Ruhaniyat-e Mobarez. The society, however, is anything but radical. Its platform calls for measures to open up economic and foreign policy, including privatization, foreign investment, and stronger diplomatic ties with the outside world. Although President Ali Akbar Hashemi Rafsanjani is not officially allied with either group, the Ruhaniyat essentially backs him, and its agenda is built around his reformist five-year plan. "The Ruhaniyat is looking more toward the future," the Iranian journalist said. "It's trying to establish a state that is viable in a modern, interdependent world—even if this sometimes comes at the cost of the revolution." The Ruhaniyat is by no means abandoning Islam as the idiom of Iranian politics, nor is it any less reverent toward the Imam; many of its leading members were his students. But its ultimate goals are comparable, in an Iranian context, with the overhauls in Eastern Europe since the demise of Communism. I saw no Ruhaniyat campaign poster at Khomeini's tomb.

Although both sides would vehemently deny it, the core issue in Iranian politics is really whether the post-Khomeini leadership should move beyond Khomeiniism. The shift would not mean abandoning the past or rejecting the Imam. "Iranians followed Khomeini not just for religious reasons," a Western diplomat who has long served in Teheran said to me. "Most of his support was based on nationalist feelings. He made it possible for Iranians to find, to retrieve, their identity. And he gave control of Iran back to the Iranians—something they haven't had for much of this century, because of the British and the Russians, and then the Americans. For that, he is still revered." But the shift would mean serious revisions, even reversals, in the revolution's future course, with a heavier emphasis on pragmatism than on piety.

The sense of transition in Teheran, however, is the product of more than just the Imam's passing; the domestic debate over change isn't happening in isolation. Although Iran still has no formal peace treaty with Iraq, Operation Desert Storm provided at least a temporary reprieve on its hostile western border and some friendlier faces among the Gulf Arabs who had sided with Baghdad during the Iran-Iraq War. Relations with Saudi Arabia, broken off a year before Khomeini's death, were restored last year. Communism—more of an anathema than capitalism, because of its atheistic premise—is no longer a threat. The Russians are not even on Iran's northern border anymore; the whole region has been reconfigured by the transformation of the former Soviet Central Asian republics—all predominantly Islamic—into independent states. And to the east the last vestiges of Afghanistan's Communist leadership have succumbed to the Mujahedin, ending a war that began the same year as Iran's revolution. Khomeini died just four months before the first cracks in the Berlin Wall marked the onset of a change in the global geostrategic balance. In the minds of many Iranians, his life is increasingly associated with a bygone era.

Although Khomeini's picture is still omnipresent—in government offices, shops, airports, and many homes—the huge paintings of the Imam on the sides of Teheran buildings were, symbolically, fading fast this spring. Many of the graffiti quoting his public utterances had become unintelligible; some had been removed as part of a cleanup campaign by Teheran's zealous new mayor. In the heart of the capital I could find only a single new tribute. Painted nearly the full height of a ten-story building, it pictured Khomeini against a blue backdrop, as if Heaven-bound, with the inscription "Dear Khomeini, We will never put down the flag that you have raised."

I asked the diplomat, who over the years has come to know virtually all the Islamic Republic's main players and a wide cross-section of the Iranian people, how prominent—on a scale of one to a hundred—the Imam was in the public consciousness three years after his death.

He thought for a moment. "I suppose Khomeini now comes only somewhere in the middle," he replied.

The Iranian journalist put it another way: "We have a Persian saying, 'What goes out of your eyes also gradually leaves your heart.' "

THE passions among Khomeini's flag-bearers ran deep during the spring campaign. On the first night of electioneering, I caught up with Abolqasem Sarhadizadeh, a Ruhaniyoun candidate, who was making a campaign appearance at a mosque in Naziabad, one of Teheran's southern suburbs of old brick and cinder-block houses sun-bleached to a raw colorlessness. Sarhadizadeh became prominent as a militant when he was the Minister of Labor and Social Affairs, between 1984 and 1990. A tall, gaunt figure, he was dressed that evening in Army fatigue trousers and a black suit jacket; after he took off his shoes to enter the mosque, I saw that his socks were threadbare. He looked much older than his forty-four years: a stubble of beard was more gray than black, and his face was deeply lined. Sarhadizadeh's election poster noted that he was a high-school graduate. After the revolution, he worked with the Revolutionary Guards and eventually rose to head the council supervising Iran's prison system. As was true of many of the first generation of revolutionary officials, his main qualification for public office was time served in the Shah's jails—in his case, fourteen years. "I struggled for an Islamic government," he explained to me, as if no other credential mattered.

Sarhadizadeh sees himself as an advocate of "barefoot Islam"—a phrase Khomeini coined to describe the revolution's devotion to the *mostazafin*,

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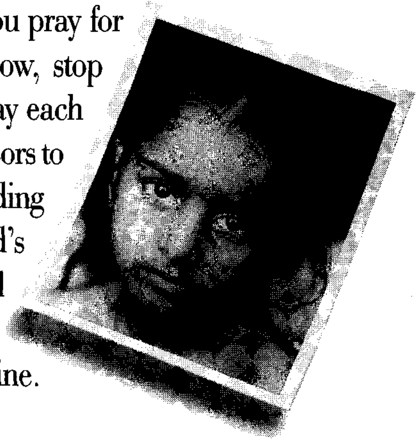

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who suffered the most during the monarchy. "I support the workers in this country and all the programs to help them," he told me as we sat on one of the mosque's worn red carpets. "As Labor Minister, I introduced a new law to change unreasonable dismissals and to improve wages and health care." The Ruhaniyoun urges the harnessing of local manpower—in a country where the unemployment rate is at least twenty-five per cent—to accelerate development and postwar reconstruction, instead of relying on loans and foreign investment. One of the theocracy's proudest achievements—and a symbol of the country's post-revolutionary independence—was paying off almost the entire foreign debt, of more than seven billion dollars, accumulated during the Shah's rule. But under Rafsanjani's five-year plan the Islamic Republic would again become a debtor nation. Teheran has already borrowed seven billion dollars, and the plan calls for a total of twenty-seven billion dollars in foreign loans and credits, which, for the Ruhaniyoun, carries the threat of a renewed dependence on outsiders.

"The opposition supports open doors in economic and foreign policy," Sarhadizadeh told me. "But most poor countries that use the open-door policy—like Bangladesh, and all the countries of Latin America—only get poorer. In foreign policy, I think we should continue to go on our own path. We shouldn't open our doors to foreign investment." He pointedly added, "I don't like American capitalism." In fact, Sarhadizadeh doesn't like America, period. He was reported to be among the members of the Ruhaniyoun who advocated siding with Iraq, Iran's longtime enemy, against the United States during Operation Desert Storm. Many in the Ruhaniyoun also called for recognition of last summer's coup in Moscow. Xenophobia still runs deep among the hard-core revolutionaries, and "Neither East nor West" remains the basis of their foreign policy. The interview ended when the crowd began a chant from the Koran to open the campaign session. As I left, I counted about eighty people in attendance.

All across Teheran, the Ruhaniyoun candidates were running hard and angrily for office. In another southern suburb, Fakhreddin Hejazi, a fiery hard-liner who had called for Nuremberg-type trials of the hostages in 1980, warned against abandoning the revolution. "We are opposed to a state of laissez-faire," he told supporters gathered at the home of a war martyr. "We are opposed to trade without the Islamic government's control. If the curb on the private sector is lifted, we will have neither bread nor religion. The economy of an Islamic country must be regulated in such a way that there are neither poor nor rich people. The Imam says that the war between poverty and wealth is on, but a certain gentleman"—a none too subtle reference to President Rafsanjani—"says it is over." Negative campaigning in Iran only occasionally becomes personal, and even then the reference is usually indirect.

"The job of a member of parliament is not limited to the building of schools and motorways," Hejazi went on. "The very important point now is that the world is in an ideological deadlock. People in the Eastern bloc are disillusioned by Communism as an ideology, and they are repelled by capitalism. . . . The West has realized, after Communism, that Islam is standing up to it. Should we therefore believe that Islam is simply a formality? Should we just say our prayers and have a comfortable life and go to Heaven? Or should our

---

## A ROUGH NIGHT

Nailed into your coffin alive, to witness
only the things seen only in the dark,
at three in the morning you turn upon the bed
you made and lie in, and gradually that witless
party last night begins to look not so bad:
those hours of bland, recyclable remarks

shared among friends were preferable at least
to this sense of spinning headlong down a hole,
unsaved because you can't cry out your fear.
Either you're sleeping alone or the wrapped-up beast
beside you snores contentedly; to be fair,
even if he were awake, your immortal soul

would be in much the same trouble. And so you rise
to warm some milk, perhaps; or pick up a book,
the worse the better; and with half a mind
to live more halfheartedly, if you can choose,
you wonder why at night you feel consigned
to fail at even that. Too early to look

hopefully out the window now, at four,
for some huge hand to screw the workaday
sun in like a bulb; or to watch it climb
as a mother mounts the stair to crack the door
of the monsterless closet. Yet by the time
light comes at last, unburdening the sky

in even-tempered gray and salmon stripes
of cloud banks (sharp as Father's brand-new tie,
and glowing with his authority), you wonder
at nothing after all, for somehow sleep's
towering wave has finally swept you under
into its viscous, lovely, odd-fished sea.

Just for an hour. Now the time to rest is over-
turned by dear life, which small birds beyond number
advertise with their cries: the call to battle,
the wolf whistle and the siren, the whispering lover,
the lullaby sung backward, the baby's rattle
shaken to tease you out of a grudging slumber.

—Mary Jo Salter

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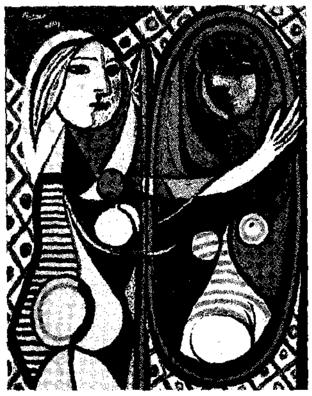

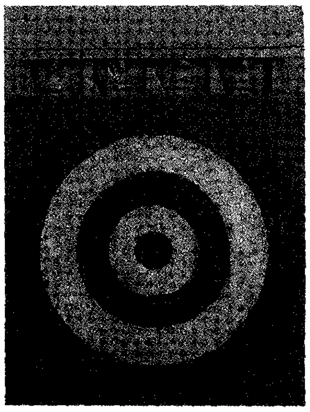

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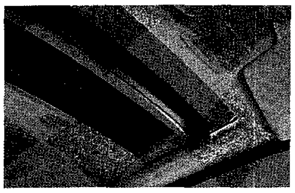

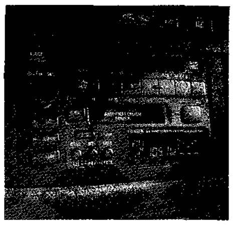

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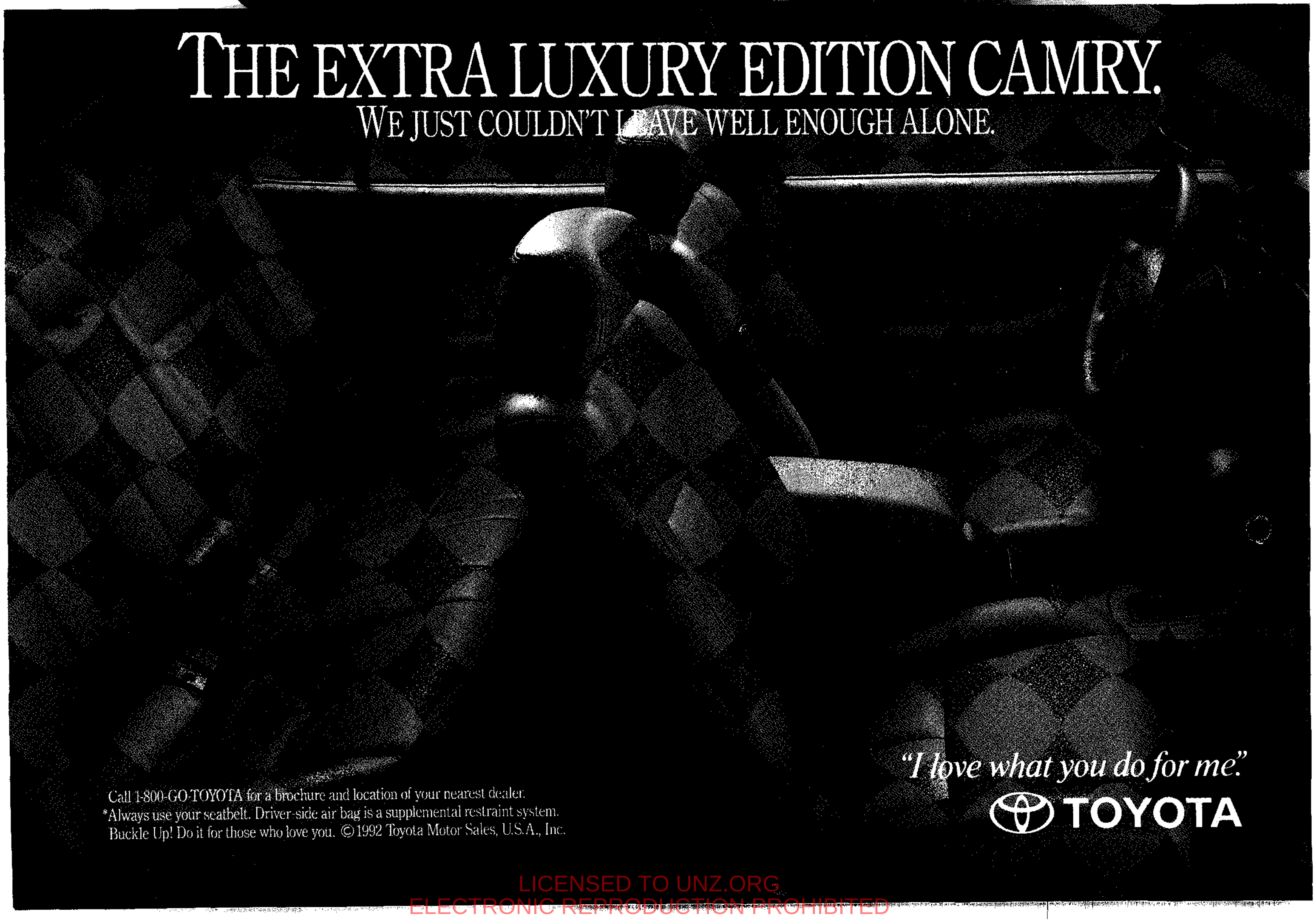

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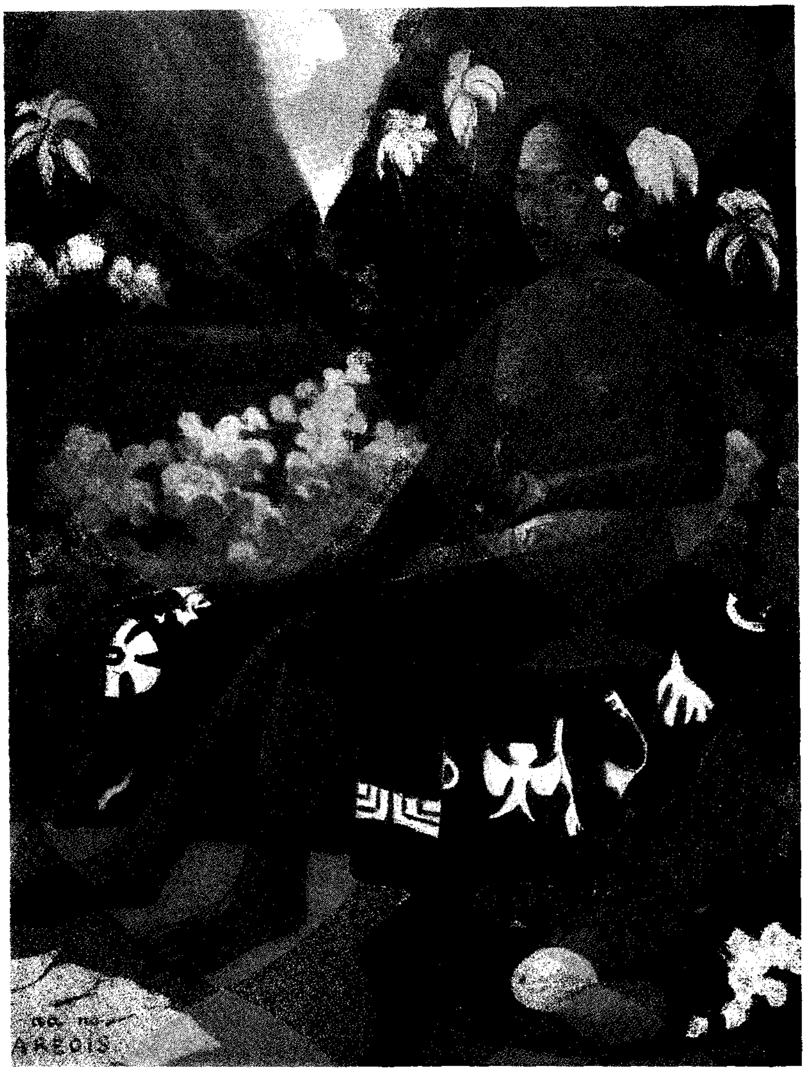
# Journeys in the Modern

# GAUGUIN



Paul Gauguin. "The Seed of the Areoi (Te aa no areois)." 1892. Oil on burlap, 36¼ x 28⅜". The Museum of Modern Art, New York. The William S. Paley Collection.

*A modern myth of the unconventional artist turning his back on civilization to pursue a more essential reality has been built on the shaky foundation of "Noa Noa," Gauguin's fanciful yet moving account of his first voyage to the South Seas. "The Seed of the Areoi," painted in 1892, depicts Gauguin's native mistress, Tehamana, as the earth-mother of a Polynesian genesis story, in which a male sun god mates with the most beautiful of earth-dwellers to found a new race. The seed that she holds represents her procreative potential. As the actual paramour of Tehamana, Gauguin naturally may have imagined himself in the male role of this drama.*

*The picture is of a Tahiti "faithfully imagined," as one of Gauguin's contemporaries put it. Such paradoxes seem indispensable to describe the achievement of this self-proclaimed "savage" who sailed so far to find new subjects, yet brought with him virtually a portable museum of copies and reproductions of art to give form to his perceptions. Presented to Paris as an authentic reflection of Oceanic myth, this image is synthesized from sources including an Eighteenth Dynasty Theban wall painting, which suggested the seated posture of the figure, and a twelfth-century stone relief from Java that provided the gesture of Tehamana's hands. The most intriguing paradox links Gauguin's distant travels and a restless search for his essential self. The poet Mallarmé hinted at this when he toasted Gauguin on his first departure for Tahiti as one seeking "new strength in a far country and in his own nature." Kirk Varnedoe, director of the department of painting and sculpture at the Museum, put it succinctly: "The voyage out was a voyage in, and back."*

Three distinct façades along West Fifty-third Street in Manhattan greet visitors to The Museum of Modern Art. Adjoining the International Style front of the Museum's first permanent home, completed in 1939, is the black grid of the east wing, part of the Museum's 1964 expansion. On the other side is the smooth dark face of the west wing, part of the major building program of the early nineteen-eighties that doubled exhibition space.

Inside, the Museum's activities are comparably multifaceted. Most visible are the special exhibitions. Those devoted to individual artists, such as this fall's "Henri Matisse: A Retrospective," may be once-in-a-generation events; the works gathered in such shows may never previously have been seen together, and they may not soon be brought together again. Historical surveys cut across artistic disciplines to illuminate the visual culture of an era. Contemporary artists are represented in such major exhibitions as the recent "*DISLOCATIONS*" and "Allegories of Modernism," and emerging talents are introduced by ongoing series like "Projects,"

Cover photos:
The Abby Aldrich Rockefeller Sculpture Garden; in foreground: Gaston Lachaise. "Standing Woman." 1932. Bronze (cast 1932). 7' 4" x 41⅛" x 19⅛". The Museum of Modern Art, New York. Mrs. Simon Guggenheim Fund.

Pablo Picasso. "Girl Before a Mirror." Boisgeloup, March 1932. Oil on canvas, 64 x 51¼". The Museum of Modern Art, New York. Gift of Mrs. Simon Guggenheim.

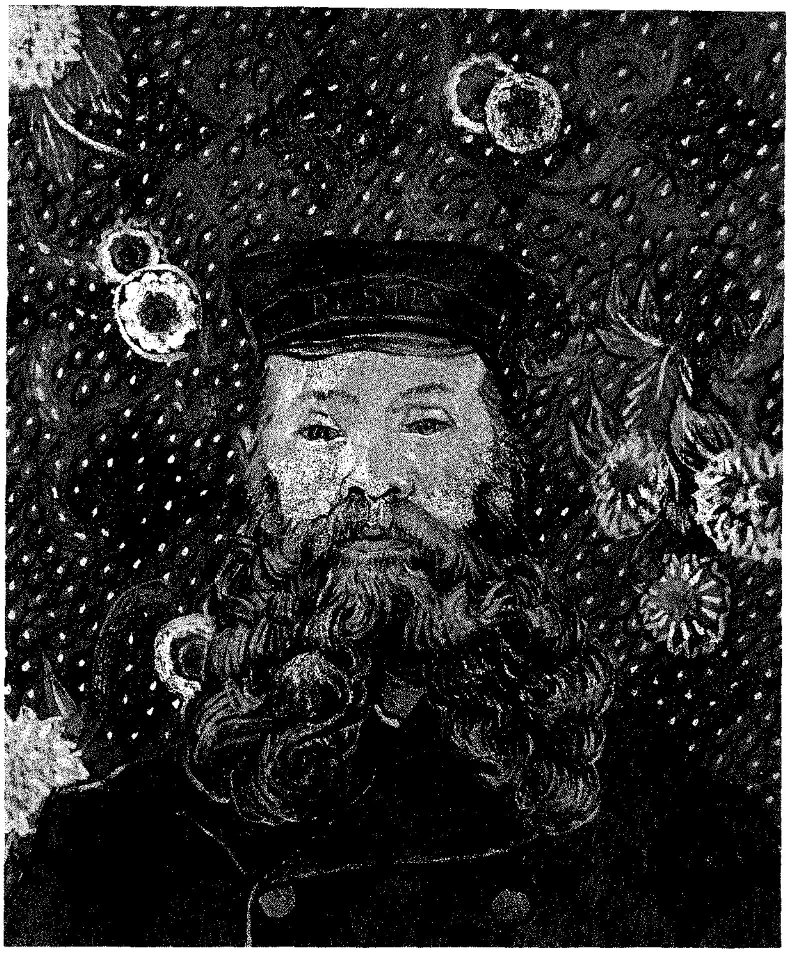
Jasper Johns. "Target with Four Faces." 1955. Assemblage: encaustic and collage on canvas with objects, 26 x 26", surmounted by four tinted plaster faces in wood box with hinged front; box, closed, 3¾ x 26 x 3½"; overall dimensions with box open, 33⅝ x 26 x 3". The Museum of Modern Art, New York. Gift of Mr. and Mrs. Robert C. Scull.

"New Photography," and "New Directors/New Films." Each year, travelling exhibitions first seen at the Museum, or specially organized, are viewed by hundreds of thousands of visitors in this country and abroad.

Since the nineteen-thirties, the Museum also has reached a wider audience through its publications, which have set high standards for clarity of writing, excellence of design, and painstaking production. The Museum's unrivalled library and recently established archive, together with study centers in the curatorial departments, provide indispensable resources to scholars. The Museum's education programs reach out to schoolchildren throughout the New York area and offer special activities for visitors of every age at the Museum's Edward John Noble Education Center and in the galleries.

**At the heart of The Museum of Modern Art's programs is a single entity: its collection.**

At the heart of these many programs is a single entity: the Museum's collection. Reaching back to the eighteen-eighties in painting, and to forty years before that in photography, it is the most comprehensive and authoritative representation of the visual culture of the modern era. Metaphors come naturally to those attempting to describe it. A. Conger Goodyear, the first president of the Museum, tried to explain in 1931 that the "permanent" collection was not to be unchangeable. It "will have somewhat the same permanence that a river has," he wrote. Two years earlier Goodyear had been enlisted as chairman of a committee to organize the new museum by Abby Aldrich Rockefeller, Lillie P. Bliss, and Mary Quinn Sullivan.



Vincent van Gogh. "Portrait of Joseph Roulin." 1889. Oil on canvas, 25⅜ x 21¾". The Museum of Modern Art, New York. Gift of Mr. and Mrs. William A. M. Burden, Mr. and Mrs. Paul Rosenberg, Nelson A. Rockefeller, Mr. and Mrs. Armand Bartos, Sidney and Harriet Janis, Mr. and Mrs. Werner E. Josten, and Loula D. Lasker Bequest (by exchange).

*Vincent van Gogh's sturdy friend Joseph Roulin loaded and unloaded mail at the Arles train station. It seems appropriate that this artist who so depended on letter-writing repeatedly portrayed Roulin; it is as if van Gogh were painting the embodiment of his communication with the world. In one of his letters, he wrote, "What excites me the most in my profession . . . is portraiture, modern portraiture. I endeavor to do this through color. . . . You see, I* should like *. . . to paint portraits which a hundred years from now will seem to the people of those days like apparitions. Thus I do not attempt to achieve this through photographic resemblance, but through our impassioned aspects, using our science and our modern taste for color as a means of expression and of exaltation of character." Excepting perhaps the penetrating eyes, van Gogh dispenses with aspects of Roulin's appearance that might traditionally have conveyed his personality, like facial expression and gesture. Roulin instead seems a kind of icon, his face an imposing mask. But the overall composition and everything around the face — the reassuring blue coat and hat, the cascading beard, and the effusive wallpaper — convey Roulin's faithfulness, his rock-like stability, and the energy of his personality. By attempting to communicate primarily on an emotional plane, through painterly means such as color and composition, van Gogh made a decisive contribution to the modern portrait.*

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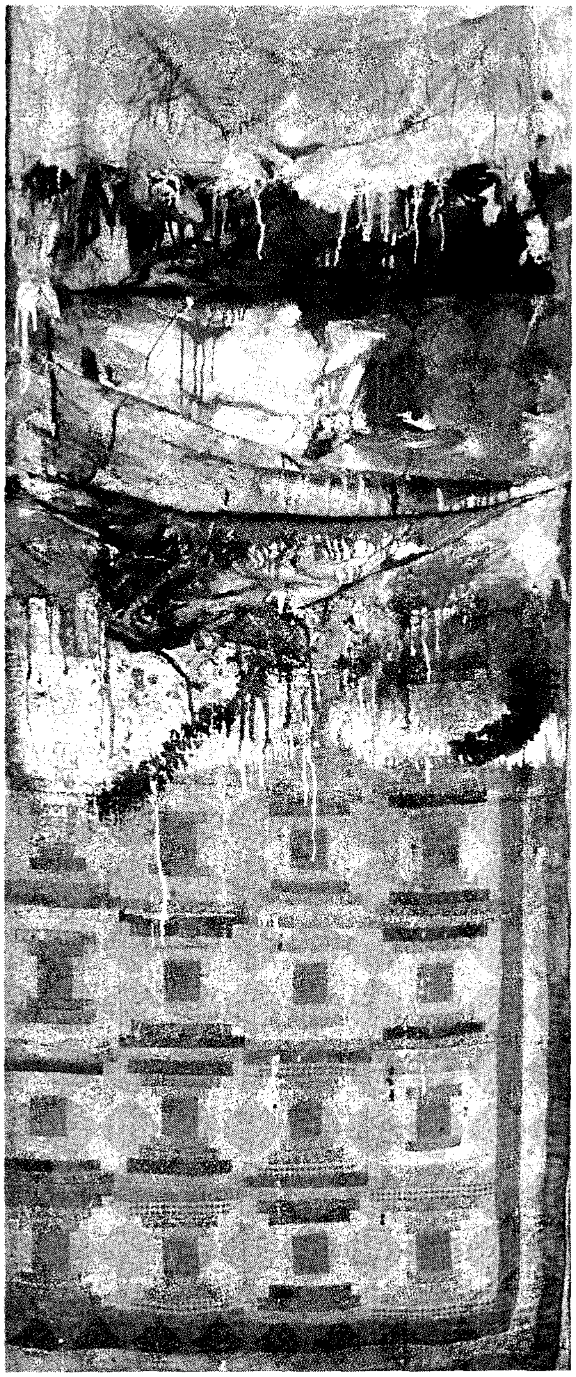
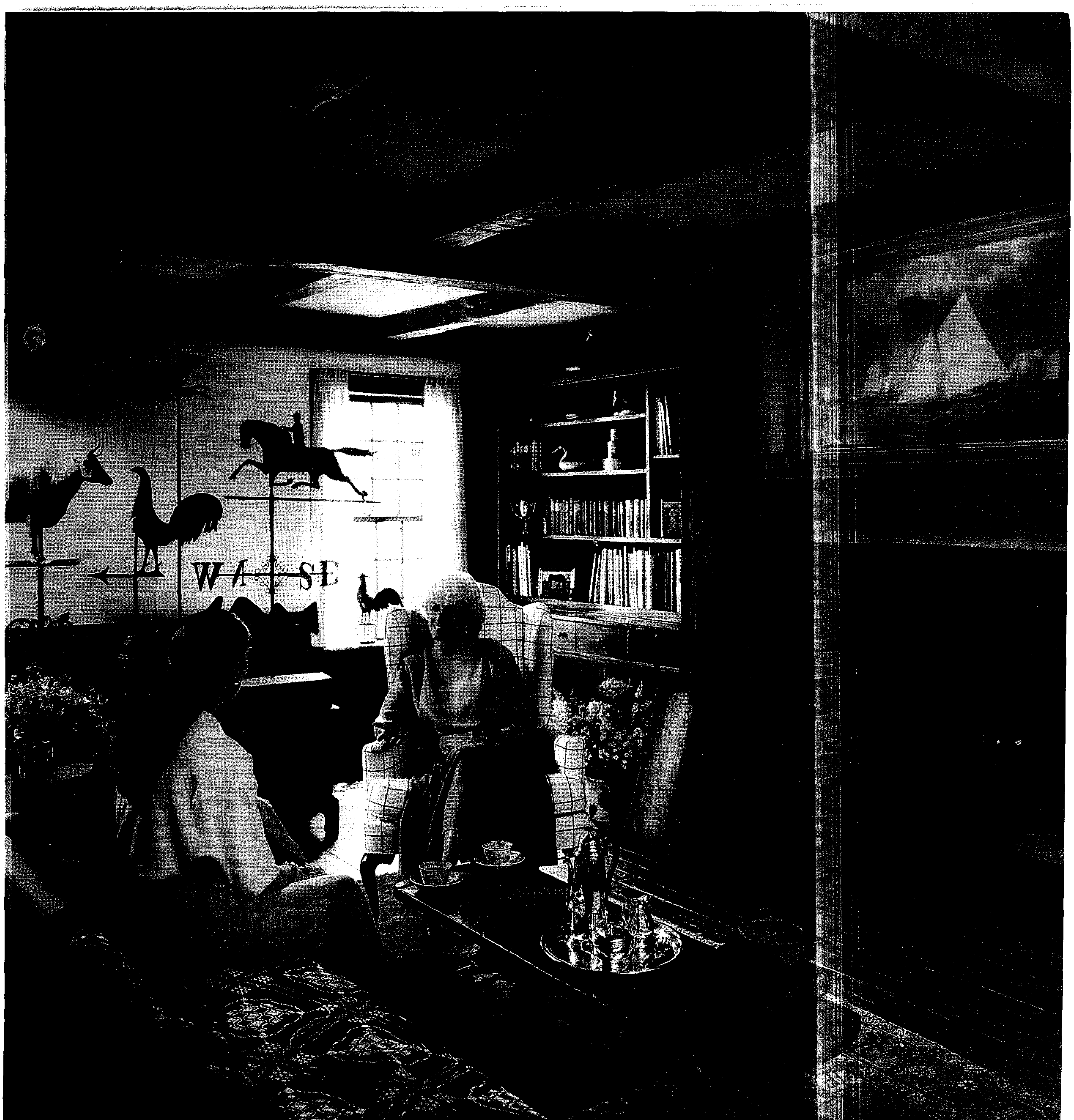


Robert Rauschenberg. "Bed." 1955. Combine painting: oil and pencil on pillow, quilt, and sheet on wood supports, 6' 3¼" x 31½" x 8". The Museum of Modern Art, New York. Fractional gift of Leo Castelli in honor of Alfred H. Barr, Jr.

*Robert Rauschenberg, in so-called combine paintings such as the 1955 "Bed," radically questioned the boundaries of art. These works not only refused to respect traditional distinctions between mediums, but sauntered back and forth across the line between art and life. "Bed" is a work of profound existential resonance, a work about being in transit, between painting and sculpture, between horizontal and vertical, between sleeping and wakefulness. The legend is that he simply awoke one May morning wanting to paint and, having nothing to paint on and no money to buy canvas, stripped the quilt from his bed, and then a sheet and pillow as well. Among the work's multitude of meanings is surely that of an "absent" or displaced self-portrait. The pillow naturally represents the head, and by sharply dividing the pillow between an upper portion, on which he has vigorously drawn, and a lower part, thickly painted, Rauschenberg evokes the traditional association of drawing with the "mental" or conceptual side of art, and of oil paint with art's sensuous, "culinary" aspect. By renewing and extending the irreverant, probing tradition of Marcel Duchamp, whose Readymades are brought to mind by the transformation of an item of everyday use, Rauschenberg kept open a path that would eventually widen into a highway for the current generation of artists.*

Goodyear and his fellow trustees were among this river's principal tributaries. From the 1931 bequest of Miss Bliss flowed eleven paintings by Paul Cézanne — among them "The Bather" (1885), which greets the visitor entering the painting and sculpture galleries today — and key works by Paul Gauguin, Georges Seurat, Odilon Redon, and others. The generosity of individuals, through donations of works or of purchase funds, has remained critical. Among the works reproduced on these pages, representing the collection as a whole, are some outstanding recent acquisitions: Vincent van Gogh's 1889 "Portrait of Joseph Roulin," purchased in 1989; Paul Gauguin's "Seed of the Areoi" (1892), which came to the Museum as part of The William S. Paley Collection; Robert Rauschenberg's 1955 "Bed," a recent gift of the art dealer Leo Castelli; and contemporary works by David Hammons and Ana Mendieta. Prominent among recent donors to the collection are the present chairman of the Museum's board of trustees, David Rockefeller, and Agnes Gund, president of the Museum.

Alfred H. Barr, Jr., the Museum's founding director, employed a machine-age metaphor when he described for the trustees in 1933 the "theory and content of an ideal collection" of modern art. The collection may, he wrote, "be thought of graphically as a *torpedo moving through time*, its nose the ever advancing present, its tail the ever receding past of fifty to a hundred years ago." As Barr rendered it, the torpedo is a kind of dynamic time-line,



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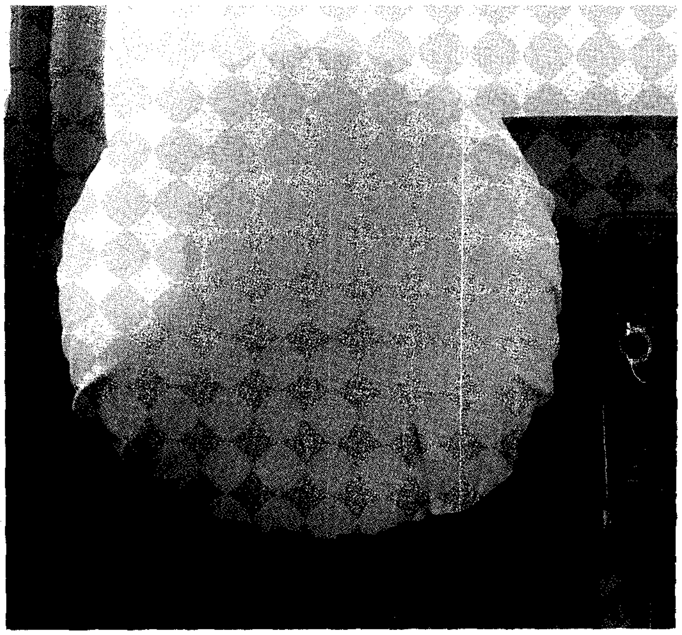

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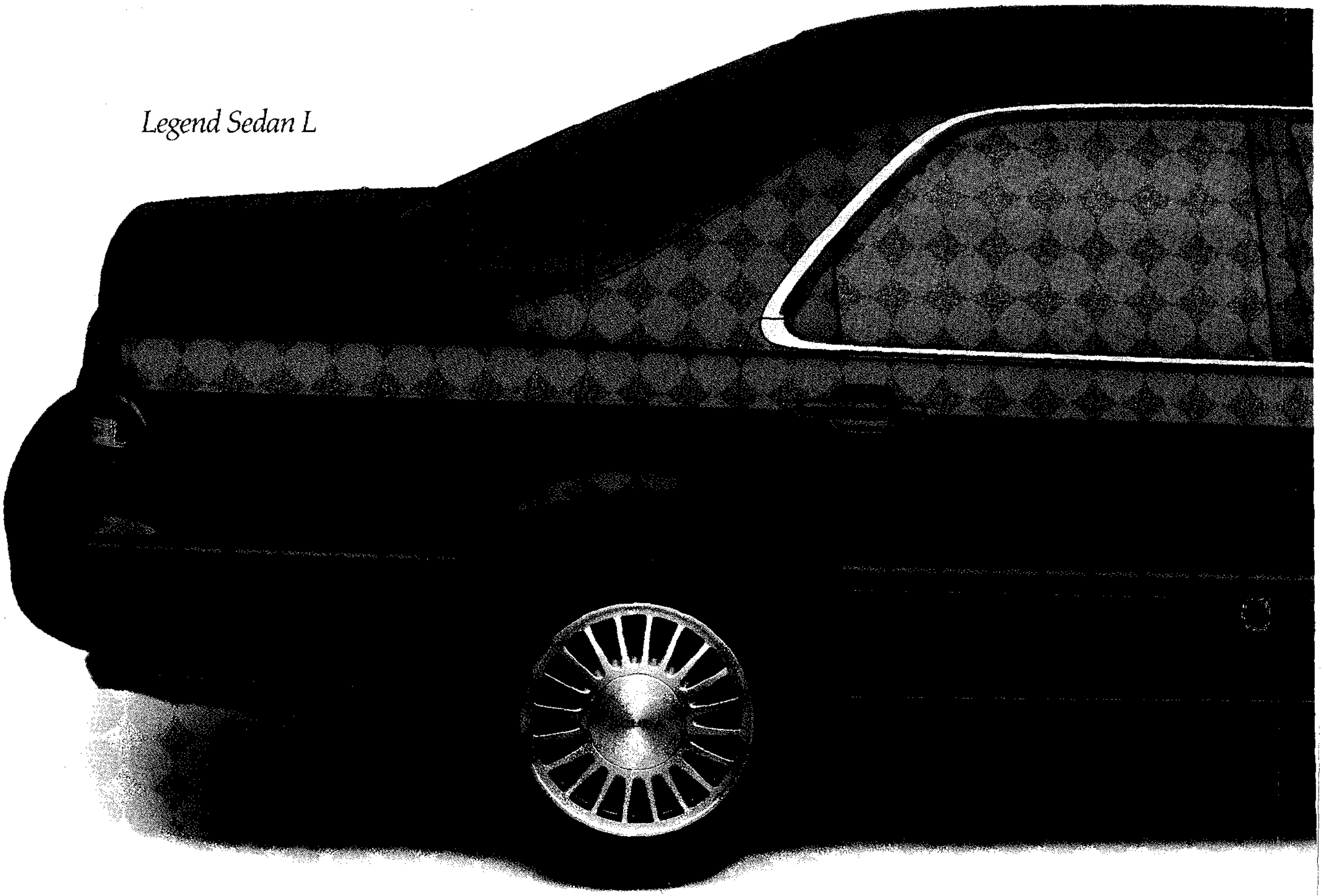

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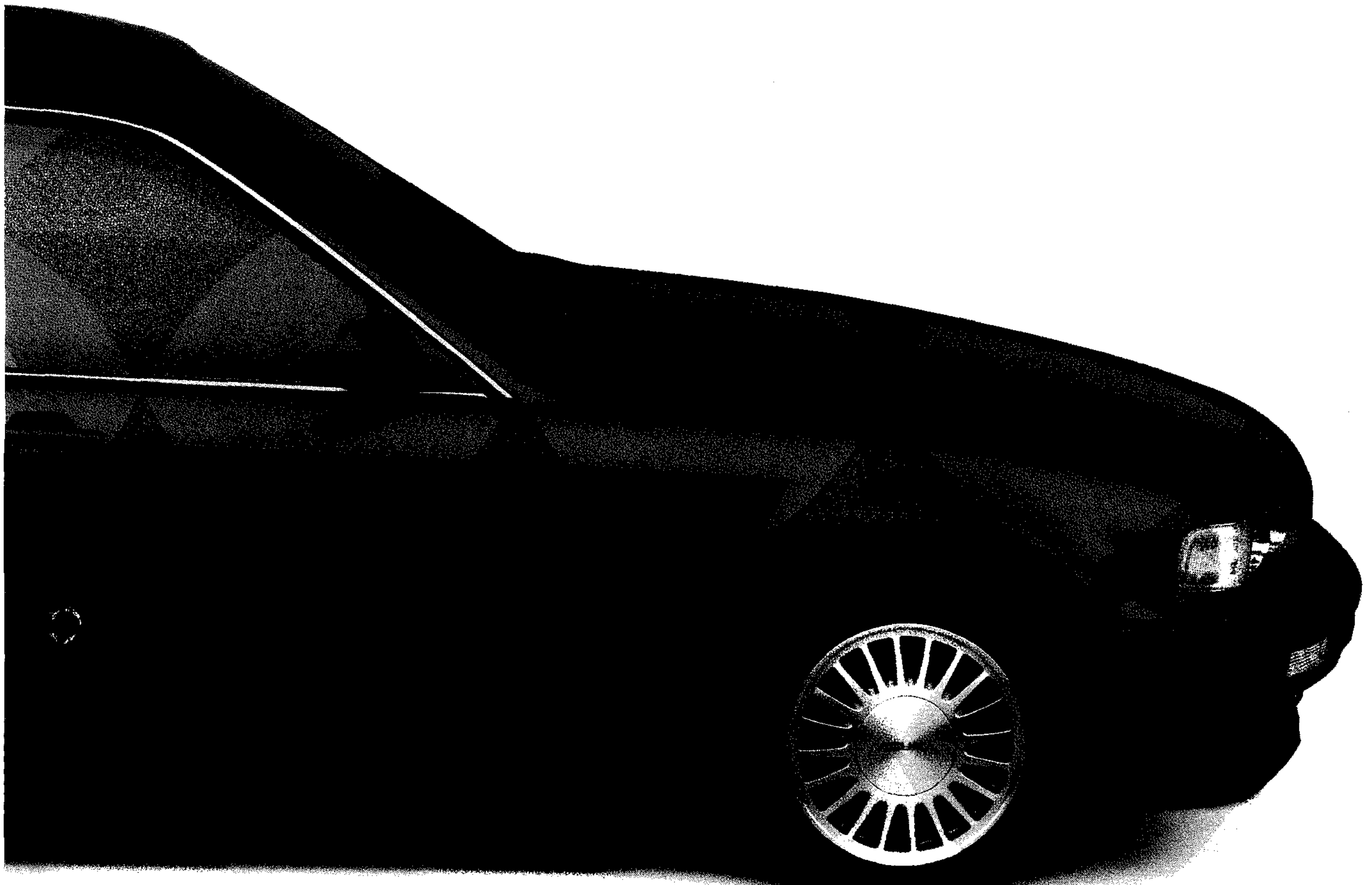

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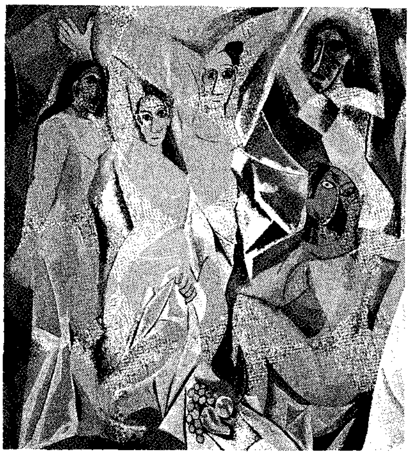
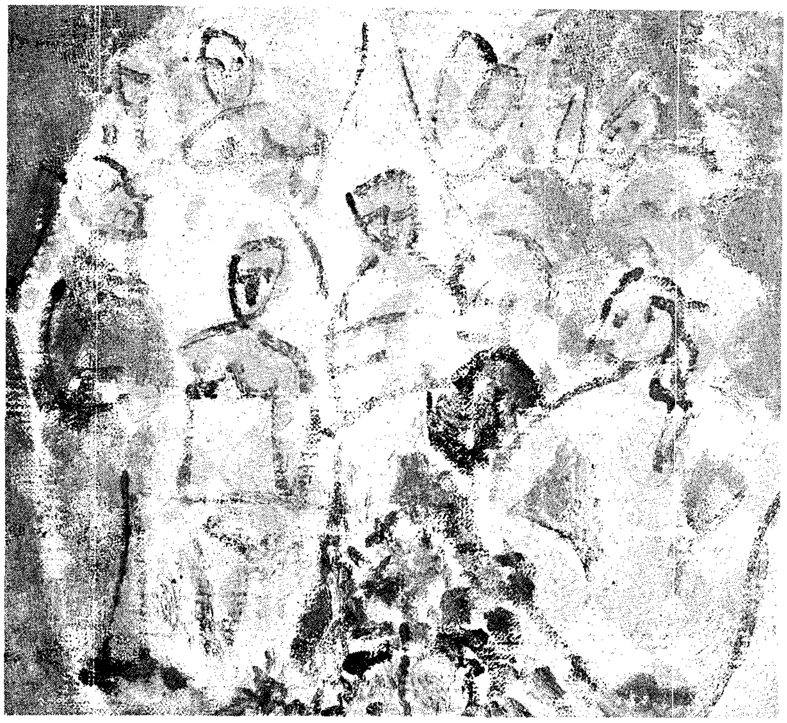


a cross-sectional diagram representing the recent history of art. The blunt nose of the torpedo, its broadest part, encompasses the full spectrum of contemporary artistic activity. The body of the torpedo is divided into periods of art in the recent past. The tail of the torpedo tapers toward the earliest era represented by the collection, where a few key works may stand for the artistic innovations of an era. As it has evolved, the collection does not leave the late nineteenth century behind, but it does tenaciously continue to follow new art "at a respectful distance," as Barr prescribed.

The Museum was the first one in New York to feature regularly the work of living artists. For them, Barr imagined the collection to represent "a vast storehouse of ideas," in the words of historian Irving Sandler, which artists could use for "new departures, depending on their vision, energy, and independence." For the public, Barr was an explorer, charting in publications and in special exhibitions the potentially confusing array of "isms" attached to the art that emerged in the period around World War I. Temporary installations of the permanent collection also have long served to map modern art's history. Since the Museum's 1964 expansion, a significant portion of the galleries has been dedicated on a continuing basis to providing viewers with the opportunity to understand that history by experiencing, at first hand, objects that represent critical moments in modern art's development.

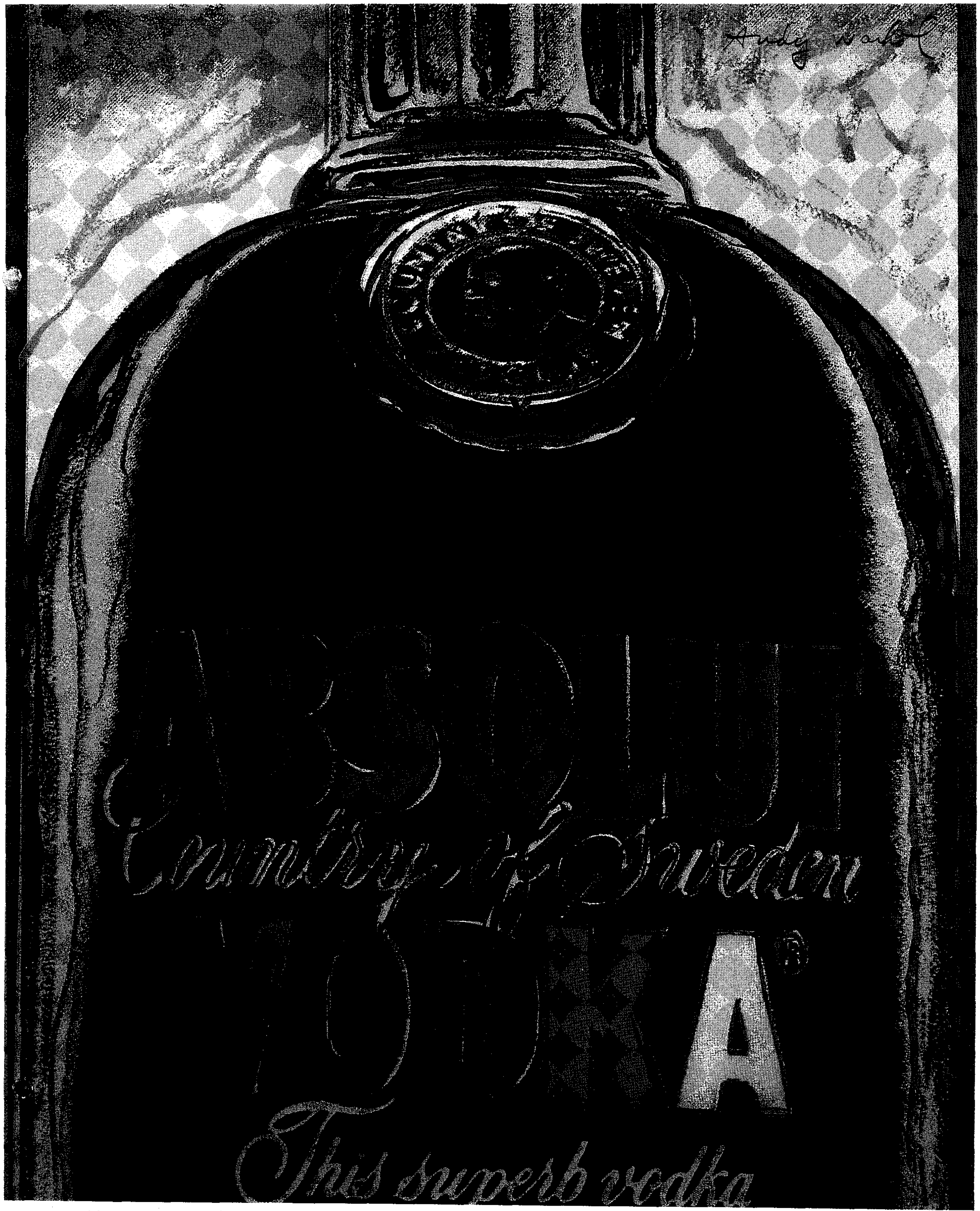


Above left: Pablo Picasso. "Les Demoiselles d'Avignon." Paris, June-July, 1907. Oil on canvas, 8' x 7' 8". The Museum of Modern Art, New York. Acquired through the Lillie P. Bliss Bequest.

Above: Pablo Picasso. Study for "Les Demoiselles d'Avignon." Paris, [early 1907]. Oil on canvas, 7½ x 7⅞". The Museum of Modern Art, New York. Acquired through the Lillie P. Bliss Bequest.

*The Museum recently acquired the only surviving oil sketch for "Les Demoiselles d'Avignon" (1907). The oil sketch allows us to see, for the first time, the color scheme Picasso originally devised for the picture, and its brusque drawing seems to foreshadow the simplified stylization of some of the large painting's figures. In the sketch we see seven figures in a bordello. At the center, behind a table with a large plate of fruit, sits a sailor surrounded by five naked prostitutes. At the left, a young man has entered whom Picasso identified as a "medical student"; early sketches show him carrying in his right hand a skull, or, in other versions, a book. Picasso thus set up an opposition between the sailor's sensual indulgence and the detached rationality of the medical student, whose knowledge of the body is more clinical, and who is more concerned with mortality. The painting's title is thought to refer to the calle Avignon, a Barcelona street where Picasso had frequented bordellos.*

*As the sailor and medical student were eliminated from the picture, it was transformed from a moralizing narrative to a confrontational, iconic image. William Rubin, director emeritus, department of painting and sculpture, has explained that it became necessary for Picasso to "recapture" some of the intended significance through style rather than storytelling. The artist partially repainted the work in the early summer of 1907, following a visit to the Musée d'Ethnographie du Trocadéro in Paris, where he was powerfully moved by the displays of tribal art. Reworking the faces on the right of the "Demoiselles," he vividly conveyed the impact of African and Oceanic sculptures. The ferocity of these passages made the already unconventional picture even more radically challenging to the few friends and fellow artists who saw it in Picasso's studio. The picture was not shown publicly until 1916. Then, and ever since, it has been generally recognized as embodying one of the most decisively innovative moments in the creation of modern painting.*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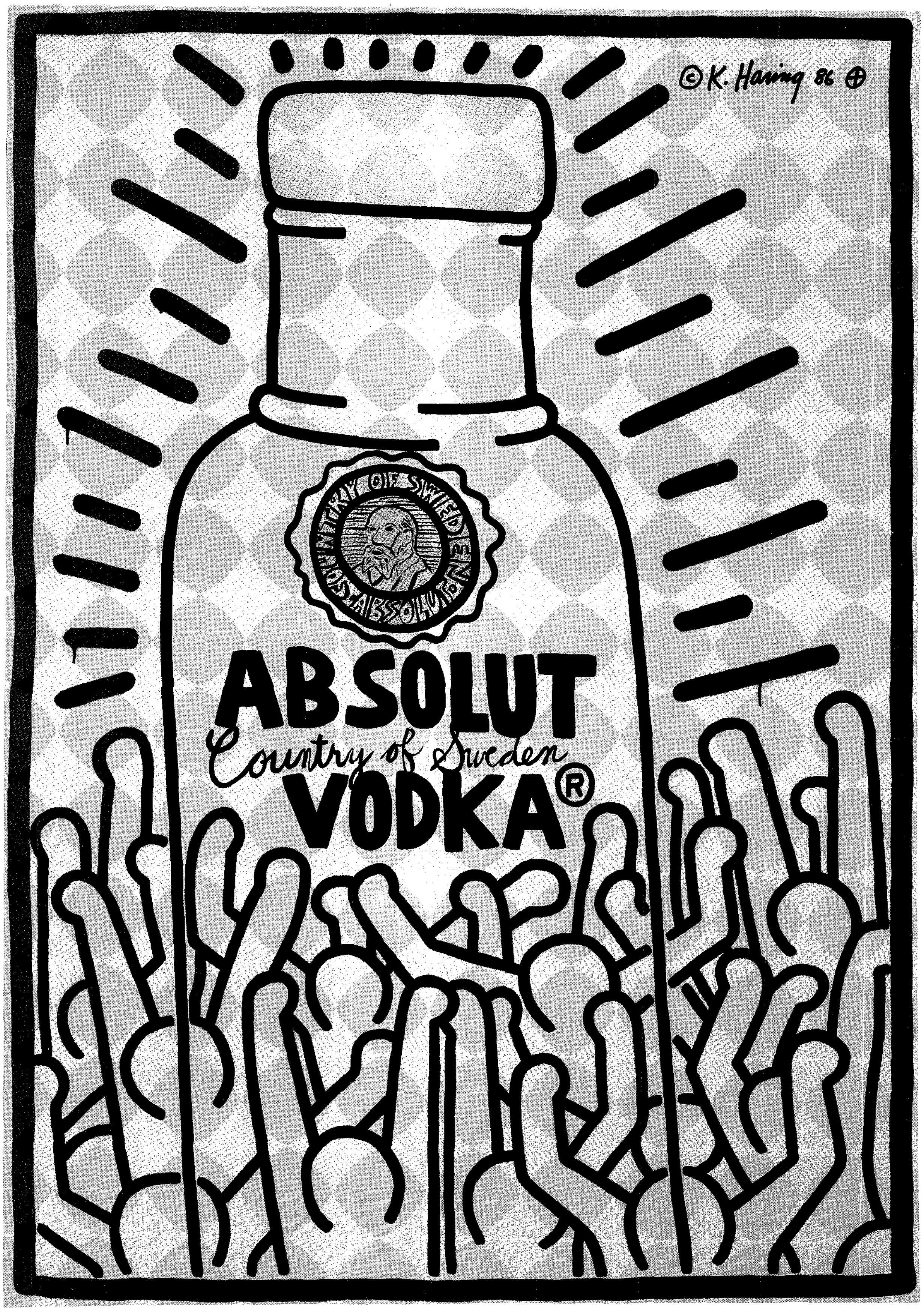
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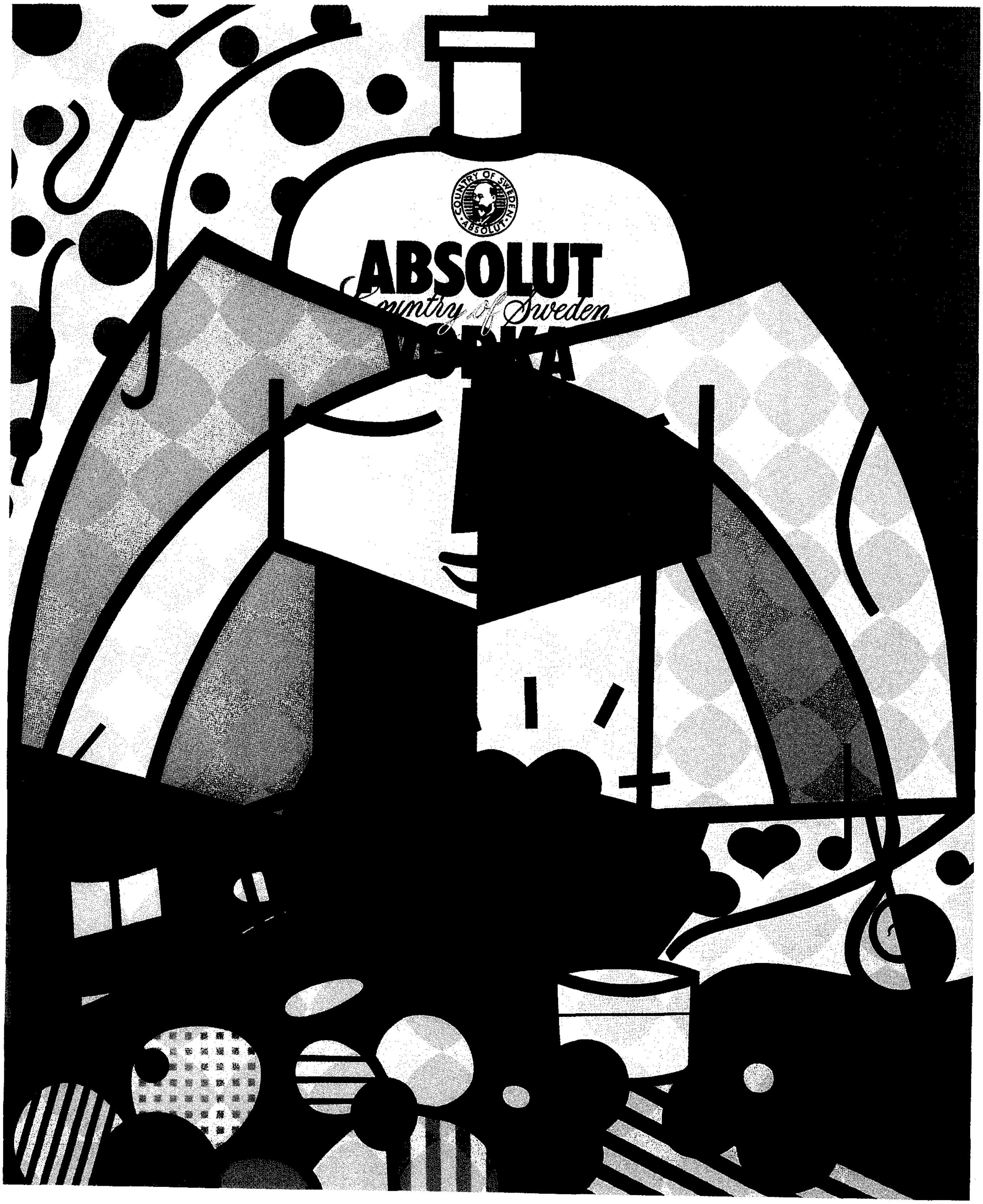
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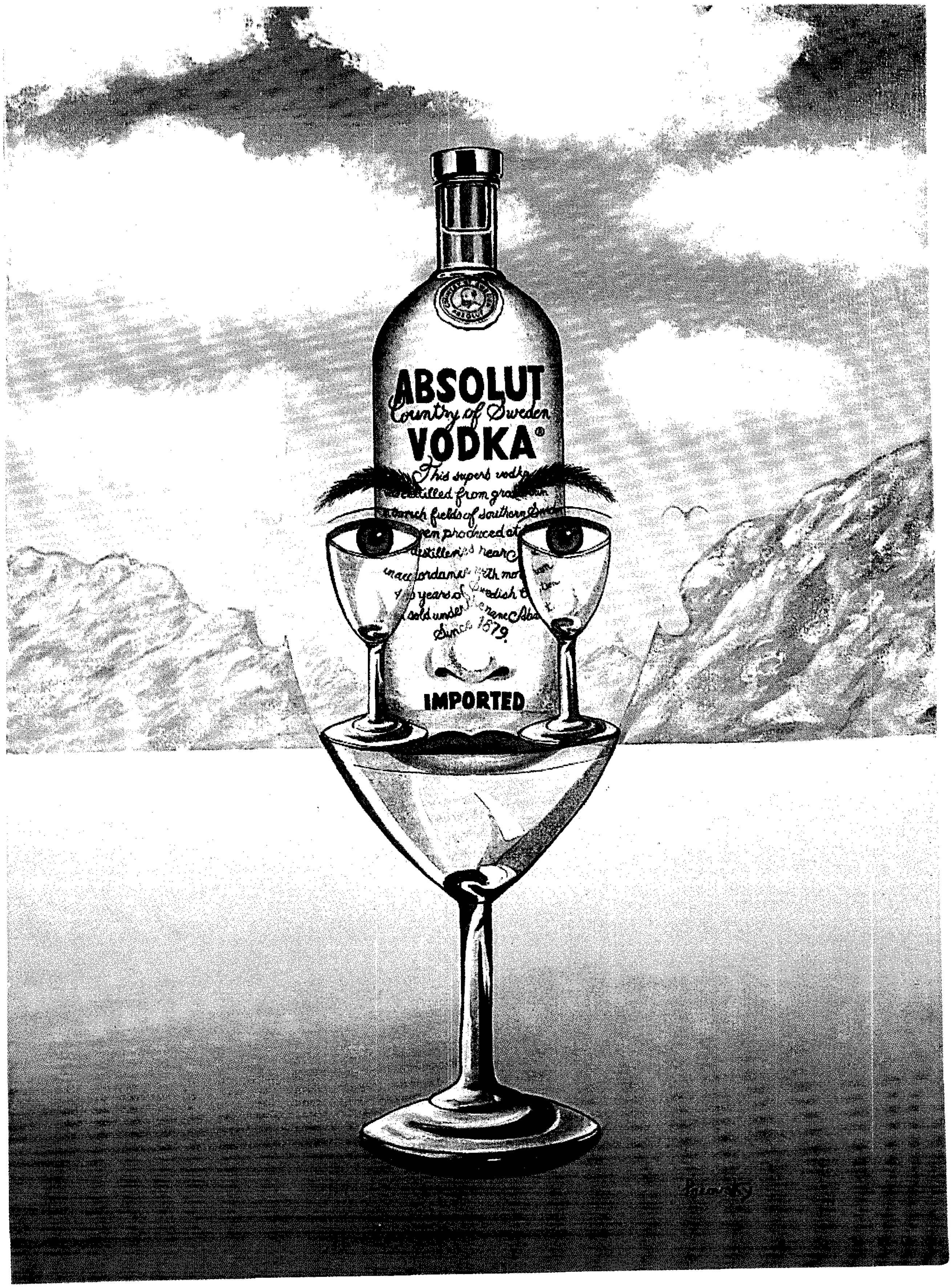
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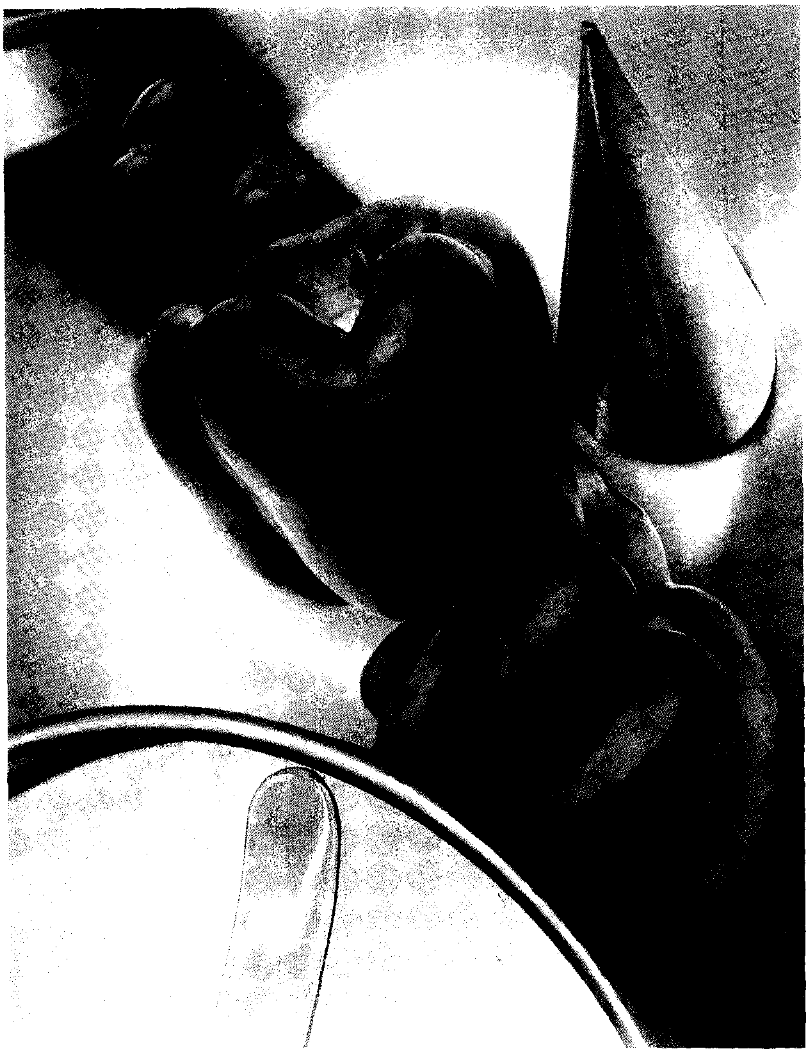
# Points of Departure

## Groover

As Richard E. Oldenburg, the present director of the Museum, has observed, Barr "was the first to conceive of a fully comprehensive modern museum, and to bring such a museum into being." Very nearly his first act upon being named director of the fledgling Museum in 1929 was to propose, in a draft for a prospectus of the Museum, a multidepartmental curatorial structure. In doing so, Barr established the territorial boundaries within the collection. The Museum now comprises the following departments, given here with their directors: painting and sculpture (Kirk Varnedoe); drawings (John Elderfield); prints and illustrated books (Riva Castleman); architecture and design (Stuart Wrede); photography (Peter Galassi); and film, which includes the video program (Mary Lea Brandy). Each of these departments has gallery space (two theatres in the case of film) devoted to the display of selections from the area of its responsibility.

In the galleries devoted to the Museum's collection of painting and sculpture, the visitor gains an authoritative overview of modern art, which concludes with presentations, displayed on a rotating basis, of contemporary works including recent acquisitions.* The Museum is of course known for its unparalleled surveys of the achievements of Picasso and Matisse, but a great many other artists and schools also are represented in significant depth, among them the Italian Futurists, Constantin Brancusi, Joan Miró, Piet Mondrian, Paul Klee, Jean Dubuffet, Jackson Pollock, and Roy Lichtenstein. This summer, a special installation of works by Philip Guston celebrates the bequest to the Museum by his widow of four major paintings which, together with previous donations, now constitute the largest and most



Jan Groover. Untitled. 1979. Chromogenic color print (Ektacolor). The Museum of Modern Art, New York. Purchased with funds given by Mrs. Armand P. Bartos.

*Seeing Jan Groover's color still lifes of kitchen utensils, plants, and vegetables when they were first exhibited in 1978, people with a casual knowledge of photography "were startled to find pictures that expanded conventional notions of what photographs looked like," according to Susan Kismaric, curator, department of photography. Some photographers and connoisseurs of the medium, on the other hand, thought the pictures a retreat from the central issues of advanced photography. In fact, Kismaric points out, in a publication that accompanied an exhibition of Groover's work at the Museum, works like this untitled 1979 print refer to photography's history, to the peppers and shells photographed by Edward Weston in the nineteen-twenties and the abstractions of bowls, fruit, and machines by Paul Strand of the late teens and early nineteen-twenties. By using color and artificial light, and printing the pictures at a size that seemed to require a wall, Groover extended this tradition.*

**The present installation will begin to be dismantled at the end of July to make room for "Henri Matisse: A Retrospective." The second floor galleries are expected to be open until mid-August. In early September, highlights from the permanent collection will go on view in the International Council Galleries on the ground floor in the Museum's west wing. Shortly after "Henri Matisse: A Retrospective" opens to the public on September 24th, further selections, including contemporary works, will appear in the Rene d'Harnoncourt Galleries on the Museum's lower level. A freshly considered comprehensive presentation of the painting and sculpture collection will be installed in the spring of 1993.*

representative selection of his art in a public collection. Certain galleries, such as the one in which the recently cleaned "Waterlilies" triptych (c. 1920) of Claude Monet is installed, are devoted to a single artist. Initially, visitors may choose to become acquainted with the principal monuments and follow a helpful itinerary; later, they may begin to seek out works that speak to their individual interests, and to find relationships between works far apart in time and superficially unrelated in style.

**Visitors to the Museum may seek out works that speak to their individual interests.**

A visitor to the Museum, stepping out from the second- or third-floor galleries into the soaring, glass-enclosed space of the Garden Hall, sees below the expanse of the Abby Aldrich Rockefeller Sculpture Garden. There, presiding over a wide-ranging installation of sculpture, are Auguste Rodin's "Monument to Balzac" (1897–98) and Gaston Lachaise's imposing 1932 "Standing Woman." A recent contemporary addition is an untitled 1989–90 bronze by Joel Shapiro that seems caught in a moment of carefree dance. The Garden is not only an outdoor sculpture gallery, but one of New York City's favorite public spaces, where visitors in warm weather may find cool refreshment at the Summer Café.

The establishment of separate departments of drawings, and of prints and illustrated books, in 1969 and 1971, respectively, paralleled the emergence of prints and drawings as vehicles for artistic statements of unprecedented scale and ambition. Artists continue, of course, to exploit traditional possibilities of drawing and the print mediums, such as their potential for intimacy, immediacy, and graphic impact. These departments' holdings originated in

Subir Banerji as Apu in Satyajit Ray's "Pather Panchali" (1955).

*"Pather Panchali" (1955) launched the long and prolific filmmaking career of Satyajit Ray, who died in April of this year. At the center of this film, about a family living in poverty in a small Benares village, is the boy Apu, whose story is followed in two sequels, "Aparajito" (1957) and "Apur Sansar" (1959), which complete the so-called "Apu Trilogy." Made over a period of three years as Ray struggled to finance it, "Pather Panchali (Song of the Road)" finally approached completion with funding from a government agency that mistook the film for a travelogue, though Ray still had no way to distribute it. When Monroe Wheeler, then the Museum's director of publications and exhibitions, travelled to Calcutta in the course of obtaining loans for an exhibition of Indian arts that was to open in April 1955, he was shown the part of the still-unfinished film that was edited, and he offered to screen it in the exhibition if it could be ready. The filmmaker and his largely amateur cast and crew exhausted themselves and met the deadline.*

*In India, the film's understated lighting, dialogue, and action challenged the prevailing operatic manner of filmmaking. Abroad, the film was at first regarded as semi-documentary or autobiographical. In fact, the trilogy is one of the most skillful literary adaptations in the history of film, being based on two very popular Bengali novels. However, the secret of the film's power, as a reviewer noted in the* Times of India *in 1956, "lies in the facility with which [Ray] penetrates beneath the skin of his characters, and fixes what is in their mind and in their heart — in the look of the eyes, the trembling of the fingers, the shadows that descend on the face."*

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New York is really cool. Today Dad and me got up before Mom and went to Central Park. We saw lots of joggers and rollerskaters. One guy did tons of tricks. Dad said maybe I could get a pair. Then we went back to the hotel and got Mom and went to the Intrepid. WOW! It's big! The guide said you could fit $3\frac{1}{2}$ football fields on the Intrepid. We also went to see the new Barosaurus at the American Museum of Natural History. It was awesome! On the way we saw a movie being filmed. I can't wait to tell Steve. We ate hot dogs + ices from a stand. And then we went to the World Trade Center. From the top we could see the Statue of Liberty and Ellis Island. That's where my great Grandma and Grandpa went through when they came to America. Dad says what we're doing tonight's a surprise. I hope it's a baseball game. I see why Mom keeps saying

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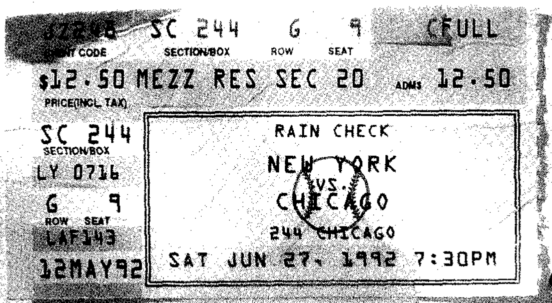

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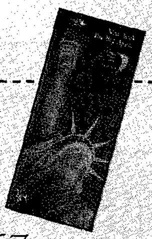

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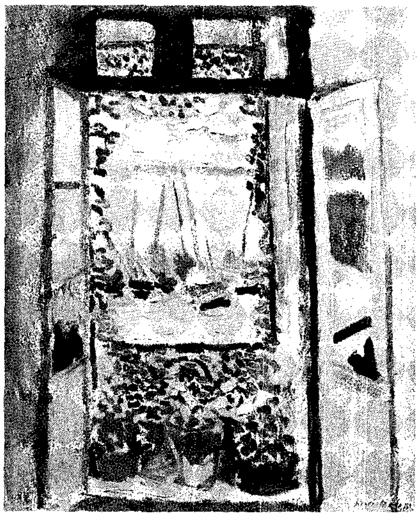
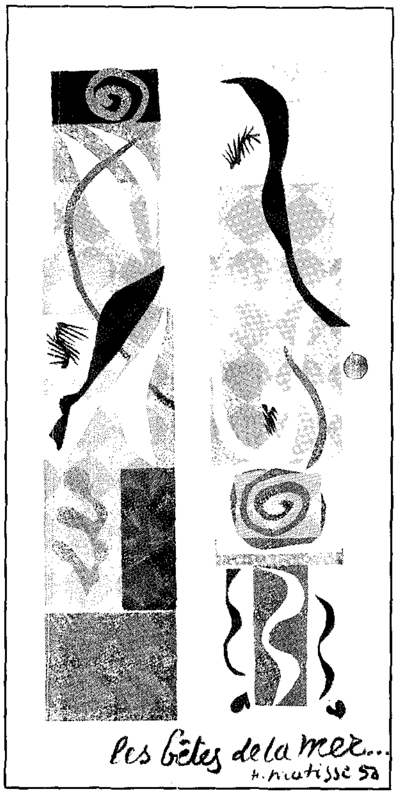


Henri Matisse.
"The Open Window
(*La Fenêtre ouverte*)."
Collioure, summer 1905.
Oil on canvas,
21¾ x 18⅛".
Collection Mrs. John Hay
Whitney.

*Below:* Henri Matisse.
"Self-Portrait (Autoportrait)."
[Collioure, summer 1906?].
Oil on canvas, 21⅝ x 18⅛".
Statens Museum for Kunst,
Copenhagen. J. Rump
Collection.


les Bêtes de la mer...
H. Matisse 50

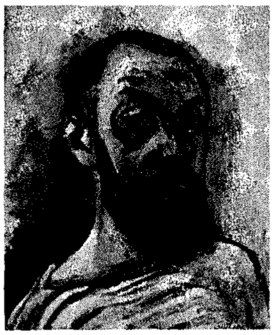
Henri Matisse. "The Beasts of the Sea . . . (Les Bêtes de la mer . . . )." Nice-Cimiez, Hôtel Régina, 1950. Gouache on paper, cut and pasted, on white paper, 9' 8⅜" x 60⅝". National Gallery of Art, Washington, D.C. Ailsa Mellon Bruce Fund.

# Henri Matisse

## A RETROSPECTIVE

September 24, 1992 - January 12, 1993

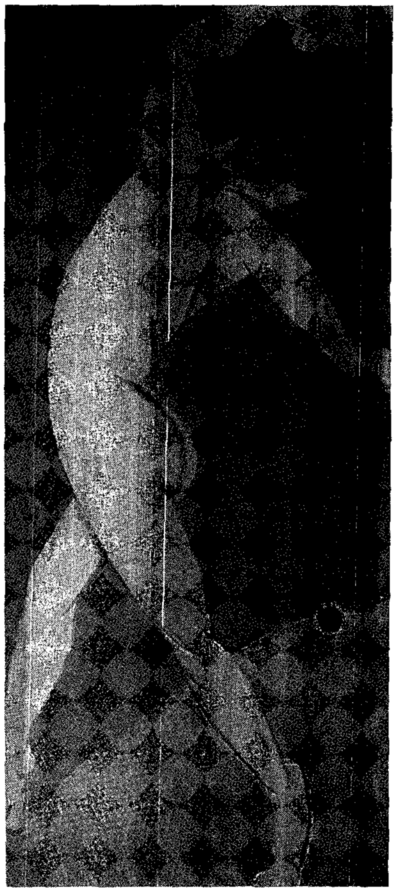
"Henri Matisse: A Retrospective," the most comprehensive exhibition of the work of Matisse ever assembled, opens this September at The Museum of Modern Art. *The extraordinary range and depth of this* artist's achievement is explored in some four hundred works from museums and private collections throughout the world. The exhibition concentrates on Matisse's paintings, but also includes sculptures, drawings, prints, and paper cutouts. "Henri Matisse: A Retrospective," which will be installed in the Museum's second- and third-floor collection galleries, will be presented only in New York.



Paintings lent from the great collections of the State Pushkin Museum of Fine Arts, Moscow, and the State Hermitage Museum, Saint Petersburg, will complement the Museum's holdings to represent the most daring period of Matisse's career, from Fauvism through the experimental years of the teens. His great imaginary figure compositions of 1907–10 will be on view, culminating with The Museum of Modern Art and Hermitage "Dance" compositions of 1910, the first time these two paintings will be shown together in the United States.

For the most radical works from the teens, the Museum's collection is complemented by *loans from the Musée National* d'Art Moderne, Centre Georges Pompidou, Paris. The Nice period, through the nineteen-twenties, will be represented by the artist's strongest works of that time. His powerful late paintings of the nineteen-thirties and forties, which will be for many viewers a revelation, together with the innovative cutouts created at the end of his life, conclude this landmark exhibition.

"Henri Matisse: A Retrospective" is organized by John Elderfield, director, department of drawings, and curator, department of painting and sculpture. It is sponsored by Philip Morris Companies Inc. Additional support has been provided by the National Endowment for the Arts and The International Council of The Museum of Modern Art. An indemnity for the exhibition has been received from the Federal Council on the Arts and the Humanities.



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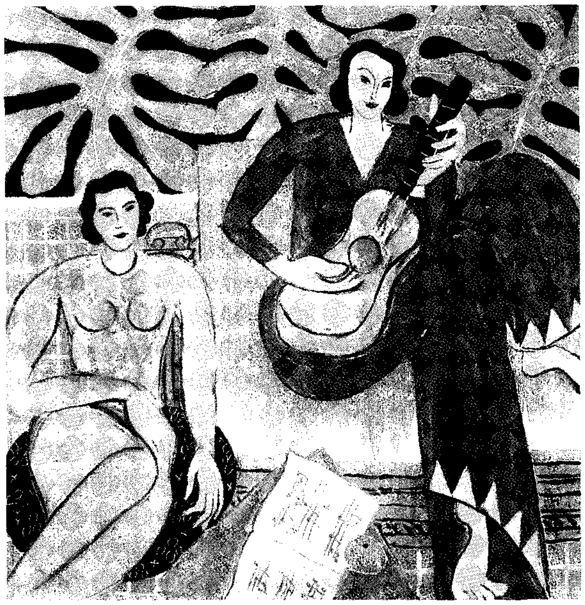
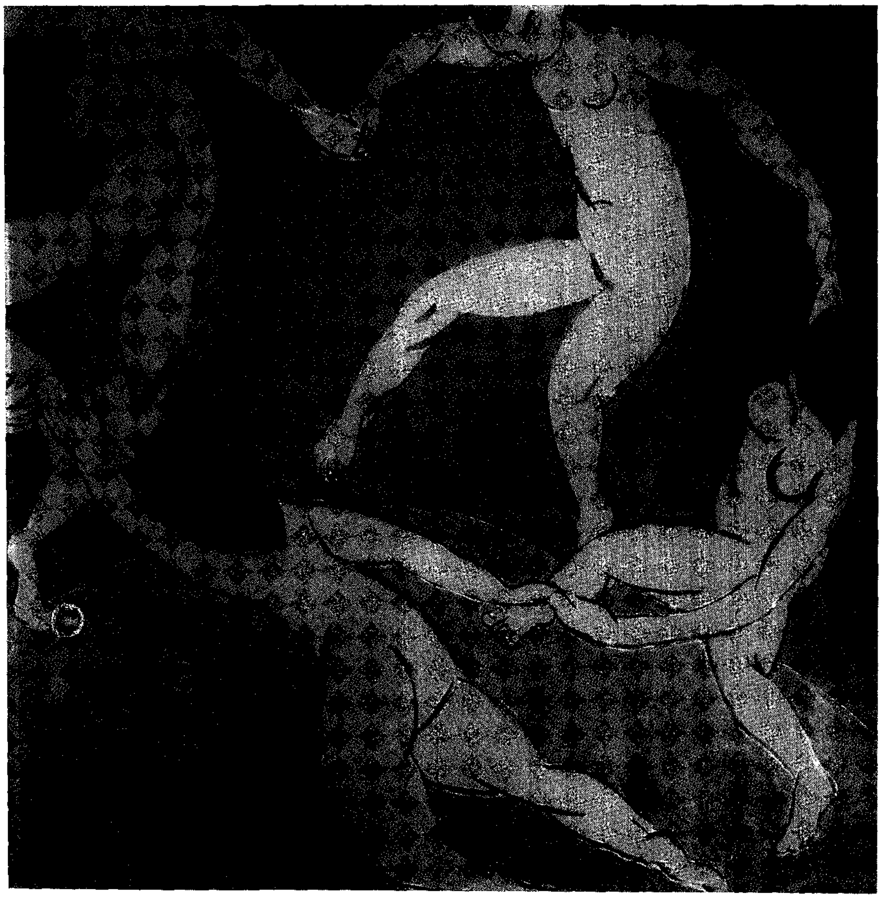


Henri Matisse. "Music (La Musique)." Nice-Cimiez, Hôtel Régina, 1939. Oil on canvas, 45⅜ x 45⅜". Albright-Knox Art Gallery, Buffalo, New York. Room of Contemporary Art Fund



Henri Matisse. "Dance (II) [La Danse (II)]." Issy-les-Moulineaux, [late 1909–summer] 1910. Oil on canvas, 8' 5⅝" x 12' 9½". The Hermitage Museum, St. Petersburg.

## See "Henri Matisse: A Retrospective" as a Member

The most rewarding way to experience "Henri Matisse: A Retrospective" is as a member of The Museum of Modern Art. Members can obtain complimentary Matisse tickets (each a $12.50 value)* before the public sale, and there is no waiting in line. Other benefits include invitations to private members' previews and special members-only evening and Sunday morning programs.

Tickets are available for members only beginning July 17th through the Ticketmaster telephone line, (212) 307-4141, or in The Museum of Modern Art Lobby.

To join, renew, or receive additional information, call the Department of Membership, (212) 708-9696.

*Depending on the level of membership, members receive from one to four complimentary tickets and may purchase up to eight additional tickets.

## Matisse Advance Ticketing

Admission: $12.50 adults; $10.00 senior citizens (65 and over) and students with valid ID; $2.00 children 6 to 15 accompanied by an adult (5 and under, free).

Tickets will be available to the public beginning August 10, 1992, through the following outlets:

The Museum of Modern Art Lobby. There is no service charge; payment can be made in cash or by check; in-person sales only. For information, call the Museum at (212) 708-9850.

Ticketmaster Telephone (212) 307-4545. There is a $3.00 service charge per ticket ($1.00 for children's tickets) and a $1.50 handling charge per order (American Express, VISA, and Mastercard accepted).

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## Summer Program Highlights

### "More than One Photography: Works since 1980 from the Collection"
### Through July 19, 1992

Drawn from recent additions to the Museum's holdings of painting and sculpture, drawings, prints, and photographs, this exhibition brings together some sixty works that illustrate the diversity of photography's roles in contemporary art.

### "Antoni Tàpies in Print"
### Through August 9, 1992

The extensive printed oeuvre of the celebrated Catalan artist Antoni Tàpies (born 1923) is explored in this major exhibition of more than a hundred prints and illustrated books from the nineteen-forties to the present.

### "Louis I. Kahn: In the Realm of Architecture"
### June 14 – August 18, 1992

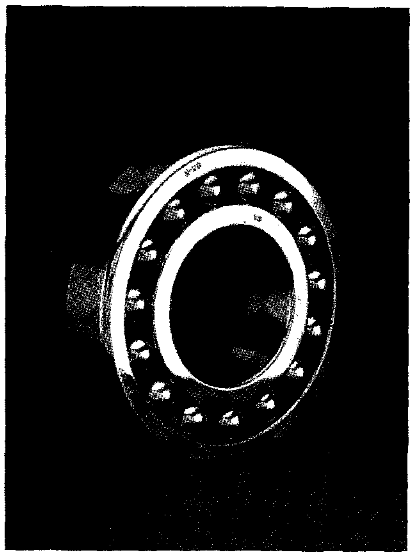
This is the first major retrospective of the life and work of a critically important figure in postwar architecture. Organized by the Museum of Contemporary Art, Los Angeles, the exhibition interweaves chronology, types of projects, and Kahn's personal philosophy of architecture. Included are drawings, sketches, paintings, scale models, and documentary photographs.

### "Cannes 45 Years: Festival Internationale du Film"
### June 19 – October 22, 1992

This major film exhibition celebrates the forty-fifth anniversary of the Cannes International Film Festival, the best known and most prestigious of its kind. Spanning the history of Cannes, the retrospective includes screenings of some one hundred and twenty-five classic films, as well as rarely seen works from world cinema.

### Summergarden

A collaboration with The Juilliard School featuring performances of twentieth-century music by distinguished young artists. Artistic Director, Paul Zukofsky. Free admission. Fridays and Saturdays in July and August. The Abby Aldrich Rockefeller Sculpture Garden is open from 6:00 P.M. to 10:00 P.M. Concerts begin each evening at 7:30 P.M.

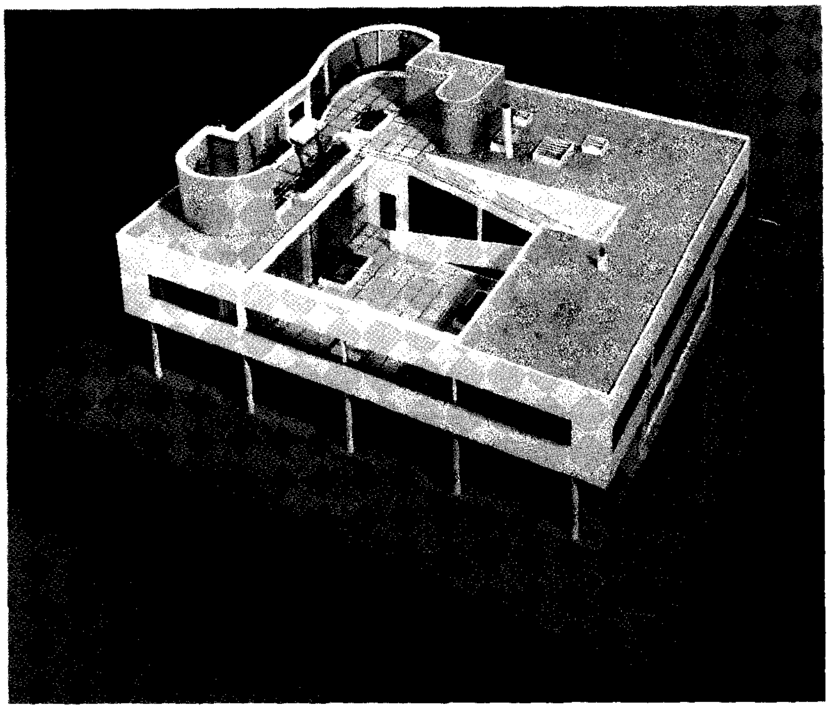


the earliest donation to the Museum; a continuing acquisition program since then has resulted in a print collection of extraordinary depth, distinguished by its diversity and rare quality, and a drawings collection widely considered the richest and most comprehensive of its kind. Selections from the holdings of both departments are regularly installed in galleries devoted to the works in their care.

The department of photography, the first such department in a museum of art, celebrated its fiftieth anniversary in 1990. In the galleries devoted to photographs in the collection, a changing selection of works are shown that propose, as director *emeritus* of the department John Szarkowski wrote, "a tentative, hypothetical, and changing description of photography's creative achievement; the collection in storage suggests a thousand possible revisions of that thesis." This summer, through August 9th, the exhibition "More than One Photography: Works since 1980 from the Collection" brings together photographic works from every curatorial department of the Museum, and the library, to examine some of the many ways photography has been used in contemporary art.

Modern art and the medium of film have grown up together, and The Museum of Modern Art was the first museum to make the collecting and exhibition of film an integral part of its program. The department of film, first known as the film library, was founded in 1935, and its holdings today number some twelve thousand items, including a historically comprehensive representation of the silent cinema, experi-

LE CORBUSIER



Above: Le Corbusier (Charles-Édouard Jeanneret), with Pierre Jeanneret. Villa Savoye, Poissy, France. Model. 1929-31. Wood, aluminum, and plastic, 25½ x 22½ x 11⅛". The Museum of Modern Art, New York. Exhibition Fund.

Above left: Sven Wingquist. Self-aligning Ball Bearing. 1929. Steel, height: 1¾"; diameter: 8½". The Museum of Modern Art, New York. Gift of SKF Industries.

*Set in the middle of a great field in Poissy, near Paris, Corbusier's Villa Savoye (1929-31), perhaps the most famous of all his houses, must have seemed at first like something from another world. The house illustrates the famous phrase "machine à habiter" ("machine for living"), which Corbusier had introduced in 1921, in a rather specific sense: as man was the measure of humanist classical architecture, so the turning radius required by a large automobile set the dimensions of the villa's ground-floor plan. Arriving from Paris, the owners were meant to drive under the house, circle around to the main entrance to discharge passengers, and proceed to the garage. From the entrance hall, a stair and a ramp lead up to the first-floor hall. The ramp continues from the terrace up to a sun deck sheltered by curvilinear wind screens. The house's formal components: the pencil-thin* pilotis *on which the living area is raised above the ground, the roof garden, open interior plan, and long windows, are combined in a composition of startling abstraction, almost entirely lacking elements normally associated with domesticity.*

*The Villa Savoye is a symptom of the aesthetic preference that came to be expressed in the nineteen-twenties for the precise geometric shapes of seemingly undesigned hand tools or machine components like the ball bearing illustrated here. It was among the objects that were shown in the Museum's 1934 exhibition "Machine Art" and that subsequently became the nucleus of the design collection. Arthur Drexler, late director of the department of architecture and design, observed that the laboratory glass, propellers, coil springs, utensils, and even hotel sauté pans seen in that show are beautiful in the sense Plato meant, in "Philebus," when he distinguished the absolute beauty of geometric figures and solids from the relative beauty of animals or pictures. It is a beauty, Drexler continued, "to which the twentieth century is particularly responsive."*

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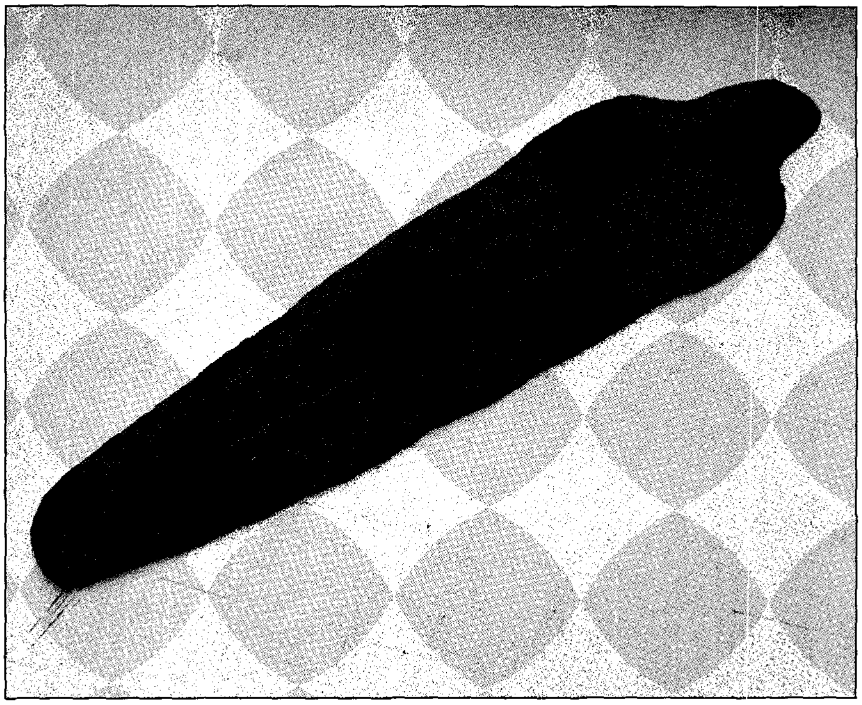


Above right: David Hammons. "High Falutin'." 1990. Metal (some parts painted with oil), oil on wood, glass, rubber, velvet, plastic, and electric light bulbs; 13' 2" x 48" x 30½". The Museum of Modern Art, New York. Robert and Meryl Meltzer Fund and purchase.

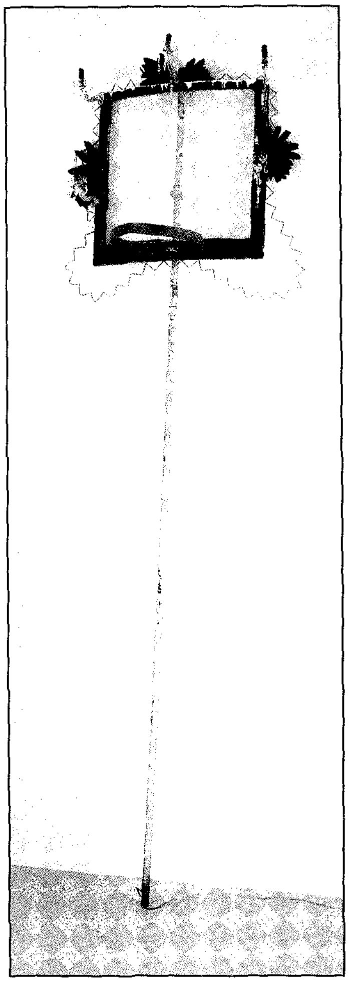
Above: Ana Mendieta "Nile Born (Nacido del Nilo)." 1984. Sand and binder on styrofoam, 2¾ x 19¼ x 61½". The Museum of Modern Art, New York. Gift of Agnes Gund.

*The determination to deal with one's own origins and situation and, at the same time, set out on a journey of discovery remains at the center of much contemporary work, including two recent acquisitions: David Hammons's "High Falutin'" (1990) and Ana Mendieta's "Nile Born (Nacido del Nilo)" (1984). Like much of Hammons's work, "High Falutin'" is made of found materials and objects, including a window, a length of pipe, rubber, velvet, glass, and tiny light bulbs. Its anthropomorphic presence, and its allusion to a basketball hoop and backboard, root it in the black urban world, where basketball is a means to status and a ticket for the favored few to escape. But the work is also, in its see-through form and playful evocation of tribal objects, a thought-provoking commentary on the origins of Western twentieth-century sculpture.*

*The primal images of the female body made by the late Cuban-born artist Ana Mendieta were often created in remote and inaccessible sites. She described them as part of a quest: "Because I have no motherland, I feel a need to join with the earth, to return to her womb." The artist Nancy Spero, a friend of Mendieta, has written of works like "Nacido del Nilo," a simple but powerfully evocative sculpture of sand, "If one of her sculptures were sent to a different planet, or were kept sealed for thousands of years on earth, it would still convey the imagery, strength, mystery, and sexuality of the female human form — woman's body and spirit inscribed." Like Gauguin's distant voyages, Mendieta's journeys to remote places were, finally, searching explorations of herself.*

mental and animated films, feature films and documentaries from around the world, and a vast film stills archive. Normally, films are screened daily in each of the Museum's two theatres, and are free with Museum admission.

Two extraordinary exhibitions launched the Museum's department of architecture and its renowned design collection. The 1932 "Modern Architecture: International Exhibition" had an immeasurable impact on perceptions of the urban fabric of America, and, in 1934, three floors of the (then much smaller) Museum were filled with examples of industrial engineering and modern design for mass production; a number of these objects became the core of the Museum's design collection, which today ranges from an automobile and helicopter on permanent view to objects that include contemporary furnishings, household appliances, and innovative consumer technology. The architecture galleries include models by early modernist



## The Museum of Modern Art

### Museum Hours

11:00 A.M.–6:00 P.M. Friday through Tuesday; 11:00 A.M.–9:00 P.M. Thursday; closed Wednesday.

### Admission

Adults, $7.50; full-time students with current identification and senior citizens 65 and over, $4.50; children under 16 accompanied by an adult, free. Museum members, free. Thursday, 5:00 P.M.–9:00 P.M., pay what you wish.

### The MoMA Stores

The MoMA Book Store, housed within the Museum, features hundreds of Museum publications and other art books, as well as posters and stationery. It's open Friday through Wednesday, 11:00 A.M.–5:45 P.M.; Thursday, 11:00 A.M.–8:45 P.M. The MoMA Design Store, located across the street at 44 West Fifty-third Street, offers furniture and design objects. It's open daily, 11:00 A.M.–6:00 P.M.; Thursday, 11:00 A.M.–8:45 P.M. Mail order: For information on how to order products and publications, call (212) 708-9888.

### Restaurants

The Garden Café offers a variety of light meals and self-service snacks and beverages in an informal atmosphere. It's open Friday through Tuesday, 11:00 A.M.–5:00 P.M.; Thursday, 11:00 A.M.–8:00 P.M.; closed Wednesday. The Members Dining Room serves lunches and Thursday dinner in an elegant setting overlooking the Sculpture Garden. Members can make reservations. Also open to non-members if space permits. Open Friday through Tuesday, 11:30 A.M.–2:30 P.M.; Thursday, 11:30 A.M.–2:30 P.M. and 5:30 P.M.–8:00 P.M.; closed Wednesday.

Exhibition and film listings: (212) 708-9480.

The Museum of Modern Art, 11 West Fifty-third Street, New York.

and contemporary architects. As with all of the departmental holdings, the collection of architecture and design is meant not only to show what has been done in the past but to suggest, by example or by prescription, what is possible in the future.

Barr's policy toward the acquisition of new works was straightforward: mistakes of commission are more easily remedied than mistakes of omission. This remains an essential tenet of curatorial policy. During the past decade, the Museum has been fortunate to have acquired key historical works that greatly enhance the collection, enabling it to tell a more complete story of modern art. The great majority of new acquisitions, however, are of contemporary art. Whatever their eventual status, the visitor cannot fail to find among these works fresh points of departure for journeys into the modern.

*Christopher Lyon is a writer and editor in New York.*

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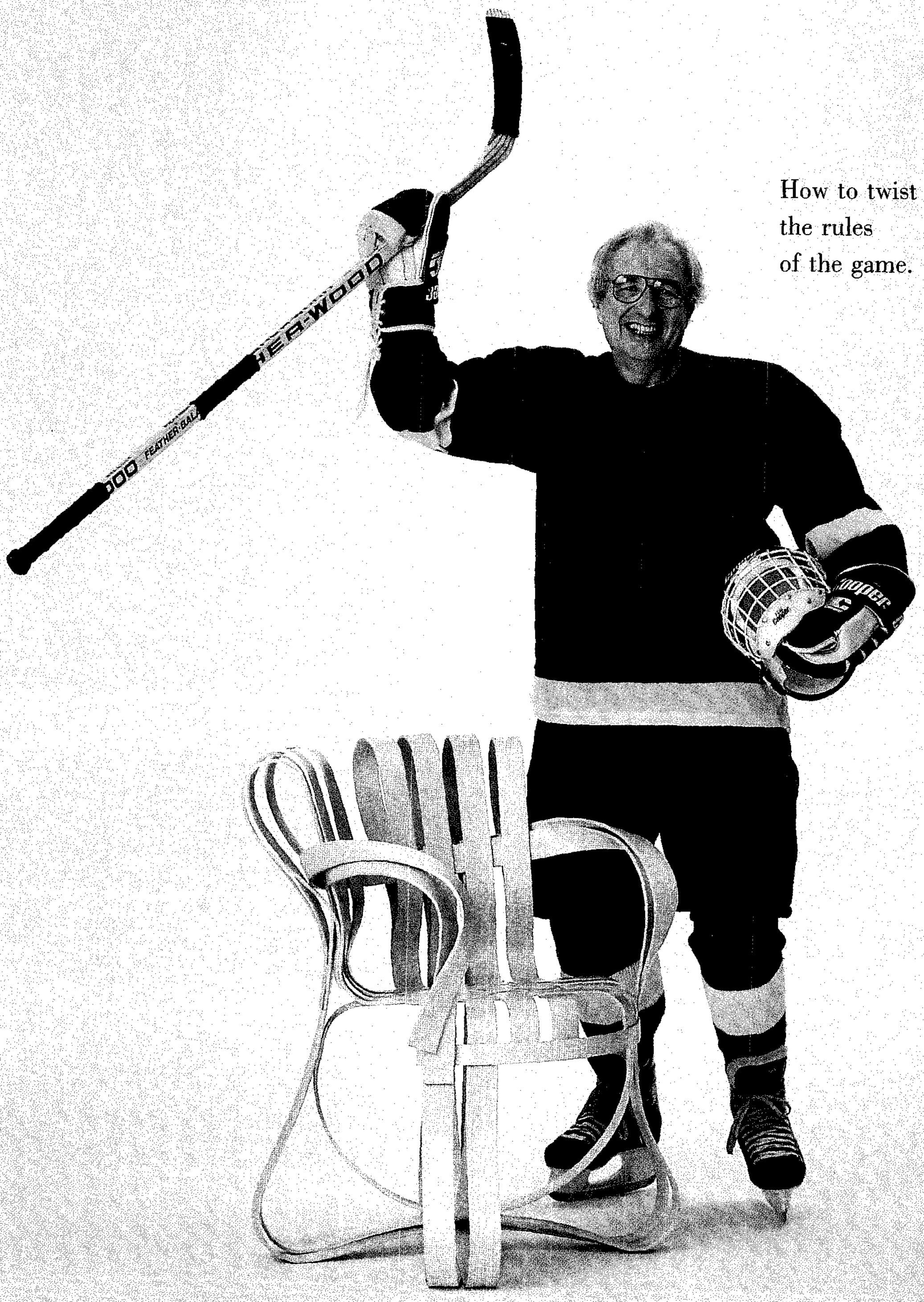
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moves bear some relation to the entire world—declaring solidarity with the Myanmar Muslims, and the [Palestinian] *intifada*, and the youth of south Lebanon?" Exporting the revolution to other Islamic lands, both near and far, is still very much on the Ruhaniyoun agenda; several of its members were opposed to Iran's role in the release of the Western hostages in Beirut last year. In contrast, Hejazi noted with some disgust, the Ruhaniyat advocates "establishing relations with South Africa and the United States."

Both Sarhadizadeh and Hejazi were members of the last Majlis, in which the debate on Khomeiniism—though never so described—was most overt. Elected in 1988, it was the most militant of the parliaments since the revolution. Khomeini had called on the faithful to elect advocates of barefoot Islam, and they did. The Imam's appeal, however, had some help from within the regime. In 1988, the election process was run by the Interior Ministry, which was then headed by Ali Akbar Mohtashami. A Khomeini protégé who had joined the Imam in exile in the nineteen-sixties, Mohtashami was rewarded with the post in 1985, on his return from Damascus, where he had orchestrated the revolution's export—an assignment that ended when a book bomb blew off most of his hands. Back in Teheran, Mohtashami gained control of the candidate-registration process as well as of the actual polling. He also controlled the nationwide network of komitehs—the neighborhood security-and-morals squads—and exercised considerable influence over provincial appointments. Tapping into his national power base, he was able to carry out the Imam's wishes almost to the letter in the last election. An Iranian political scientist called his performance "a work of art."

After the Imam's death, the Islamic Republic went through a major shakeup in leadership, and the constitution was amended for the first time since 1979. The 1979 constitution had established the President as a figurehead of state, and the Prime Minister as the head of government. Amendments in July of 1989 abolished the Premiership and established the President as both head of state and head of government. After nationwide elections at the same time, Rafsanjani—the son of a wealthy pistachio farmer, and the former speaker of the Majlis—became Iran's first executive President. Among subsequent changes were the removal of Mohtashami from the Interior Ministry and of Sarhadizadeh from the Labor Ministry. As Rafsanjani cleaned house, the Majlis became the last stronghold of Khomeini's flag-bearers; it grew even more militant after Mohtashami and Sarhadizadeh won vacated parliamentary seats in 1990. In the Majlis, the Ruhaniyoun often had the last word—or, at least, enough words to filibuster approval of Rafsanjani's reforms for months.

In this spring's election, however, Rafsanjani had the last word. In the kind of masterly manipulation that has become his trademark, he engineered a new screening process for the candidates. The twelve-man Council of Guardians, the fourth branch of Iran's government, was now empowered to determine who was qualified to run, a move that effectively superseded the Interior Ministry. Although the government denied it, Teheranis openly spoke of the screening process—gleefully or despondently, depending on their own "tendencies"—as the latest step in a deliberate strategy to eliminate the Ruhaniyoun as a major player.

Like virtually everyone else in the Middle East, Iranians love conspiracy theories, whether or not they bear any resemblance to reality. (Most ordinary Teheranis I have met over the years believe, to this day, that an all-powerful Central Intelligence Agency put Khomeini in power after the United States recognized that the Shah was no longer a viable leader. The facts—the American Embassy takeover, American economic sanctions, American aid to Iraq, American bombing of Iranian offshore oil platforms in 1988—do nothing to dissuade them.) In this vein, Teheranis whispered that the cunning Rafsanjani was moving to discredit, even humiliate, the Ruhaniyoun, despite his public embrace of its members as brothers and his expressions of astonishment at their complaints.

The latest speculations may be true, however, for a third of the Majlis candidates—or over a thousand of the more than three thousand who filed to run—were disqualified by the Council of Guardians. Among them were forty incumbents, some of whom had served in all three previous parliaments. To no one's surprise, most of the disqualified incumbents belonged to the Ruhaniyoun, including Khalkhali, the hanging judge; Asgharzadeh, the spokesman at the occupied American Embassy; and two other incumbents associated with the hostage episode. Teheran's rumor mill reported that nearly all the other notable hard-liners—among them Mohtashami—had also been barred, only to have their candidacies "reconsidered" at the last minute, after they threatened mass public strikes and a boycott of the election.

The reasons for disqualification were kept not only from the public but also, apparently, from some of the candidates. "To date, I have not even been given written notification of the rejection of my candidacy," an infuriated Khalkhali complained to the local media. "I learned from the press and radio that my name was not among those accepted. . . . The members of the Council of Guardians are not aware that by rejecting me they have, in a way, ridiculed the exhortations of the Imam. . . . Do the people not understand that there are hidden hands behind the scene? . . . The idea behind all this—in the light of such blatant violations—was that the [Ruhaniyoun] should not participate in the elections."

After Khalkhali's outburst, the Western diplomat remarked to me, "You have to play tricks here to survive. It was true in the Shah's era. It's true now. This is part of the Orient—part of the game. They just don't like it when it comes around full circle."

The disqualifications added considerable tension to the election week and elicited some threats about the contest's outcome. "I notify our brothers at the top of government centers," Mohtashami declared. "Those who are striking us now will someday be struck by others. If we are not elected, the Western world should not believe that we will let the government of Iran spoil the heritage of the revolution."

Rafsanjani was prepared to risk the Ruhaniyoun's wrath because his concerns extended well beyond the election. Since Khomeini's death, the unique "government of God" the Imam created has become vulnerable. Heavily influenced by Plato's Republic, which he studied as a young theologian, Khomeini combined the concept of a philosopher-

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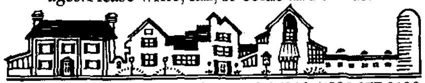

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king with the Shiite belief in the clergy's authority to interpret God's will for the faithful. The result was a new political structure, built around a Valiyat-e Faqih, or Supreme Jurisprudent. As Faqih, Khomeini was outside the daily government, yet when he chose, or others asked, he exercised the ultimate executive, legislative, and judicial authority. The Faqih is the only position for which there is no term length or limitation in Iran's constitution.

The system had legitimacy as long as Khomeini was alive. He had the credentials and the public following to be a Faqih. But Iran's theocracy has never had the full support even of its clergy; the Shiite grand ayatollahs all disagreed with the Faqih concept. And Khomeini's designated heir, Ayatollah Hossein Ali Montazeri, was dismissed, in March of 1989, for disagreeing with the Imam on a host of issues.

Over tea, a political scientist in Teheran who has often been my guide through the labyrinth of Iranian politics explained the regime's dilemma to me. "The government's very legitimacy is based on its supreme religious authority," he said. "The problem for the mullahs is that Khomeini is a hard man to replace. As they discovered, it's virtually impossible. After the Imam died, there was no one of sufficient rank to succeed him who believed in the idea of a Faqih. In the end, the Assembly of Experts had to turn to a hojatoleslam and hastily elevate him to ayatollah. Now the whole system is vulnerable." The new Faqih is Ali Khamenei, Rafsanjani's predecessor as President. His former title of hojatoleslam—which is also Rafsanjani's title—means "authority on Islam," and Iran's mosques and seminaries boast thousands of hojatoleslams; ayatollah, the next and highest rank, means "sign of God."

"We went through the rote of 'The Faqih is dead. Long live the Faqih,'" the political scientist continued. "But it wasn't the same. Khomeini could call for people to become martyrs in a long war, and a lot of them would go to their deaths smiling. Khamenei can't. Khomeini could say that economic times are difficult and we all have to sacrifice for the cause, and people would listen. Khamenei doesn't have that kind of power. That doesn't mean he isn't a good or respected mullah. Iranians listen to what he says, but they don't listen in the same way. You don't hear people calling him 'Imam.' I don't think anyone would even consider it. Some people have even started turning to other religious leaders."

To prevent the erosion of the regime's legitimacy, Rafsanjani has been methodically working to fashion a durable Islamic state as the basis of authority and to make its survival less dependent on the standing of the Faqih. The creation of an executive Presidency was only the first step. With charm and personal attention, he has also expanded the regime's constituency beyond the hard-core Islamists, who now constitute less than ten per cent of the electorate. Many middle- and upper-class Teheranis who felt repressed by the revolution's social restrictions and infuriated by some of its tactics told me this spring that they supported Rafsanjani's efforts; no alternative attracted them. Jews and Christians in Teheran told me they believed that Rafsanjani genuinely cared about the religious minorities and that they would be safe under his rule. Words of approval came even from a taxi-driver who had named his two young sons Mohammad and Reza, after the last Shah. "I don't like any of them," he grumbled. "But Rafsanjani's the best of a bad lot. Sometimes I forget that he's a mullah."

Also fundamental to the process is the elimination of revolutionary purists, who oppose any deviation from the strictest interpretation of the Imam's line. Several ministries have already undergone quiet leadership changes. The new Finance Minister earned his doctorate in economics at the University of California at Davis; the new Central Bank director studied economics at the New School for Social Research, in New York, and at the University of California at Los Angeles. To replace hard-liners in the parliament, the Ruhaniyat introduced a host of technocrats and new faces. High on the list of Majlis candidates was Mohammad Javad Larijani, a Berkeley-educated former Deputy Foreign Minister.

On the opening night of the campaign, after talking with Sarhadizadeh, I went to see Larijani at a mosque in southern Teheran. Bearded and bespectacled, Larijani is an affable fellow, with a wry sense of humor. After leaving the Foreign Ministry, where

I last interviewed him, he had gone back to teaching at Teheran's Institute of Applied Mathematics, and training new diplomats. Larijani was sitting on the floor of the mosque taking written questions when I arrived. I was in time to hear him answer a query about the disqualified candidates. "I have no special position," he said, with diplomatic aplomb. "These candidates will probably be employed in other sectors of government in the future." Indeed, there were reports that the regime would not cast the disqualified candidates totally adrift, in part to prevent them from more open opposition or from going underground.

After the session, Larijani stayed to chat. "The type of question indicates the depth of political thinking among the people," he told me. "They are not naïve. It also shows the maturity of the revolution—that the system is working. There's no need for a coup d'état." I was surprised at his candid allusion to the potential election backlash. He also said that the election would be a watershed, explaining, "It will consolidate the power of the President. Now he'll have the majority backing him up."

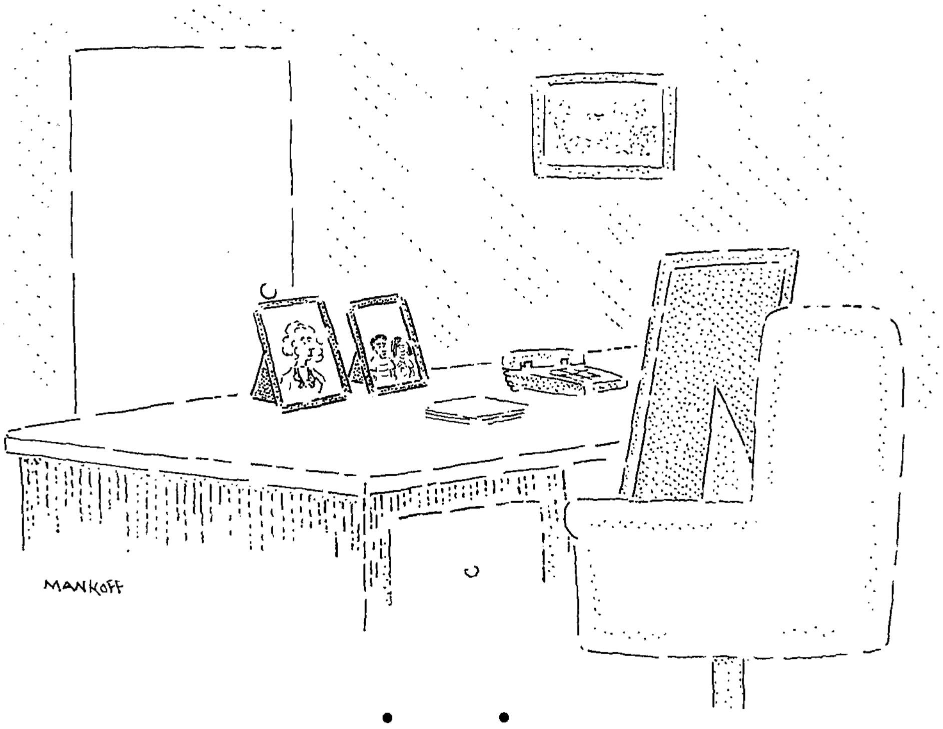
George Bush might be envious, I said. He smiled. I asked him about charges that the Ruhaniyat was abandoning barefoot Islam.

"We've begun liberalization, opening a free market, boosting production," he replied. "But that doesn't mean we've forgotten the needy in society. Which way is better to help them—to put them on welfare or to boost the economy? The welfare system is not an answer. It brings only minor and transient results."

I asked Larijani if anyone had ever called him a Republican.

He smiled again. "At least, I'm not a hawkish Republican," he said.

THE Teheran Stock Exchange opened in 1966, as one of the monarchy's economic reforms. After the revolution, almost half the hundred and five companies listed on the exchange were nationalized, and it sank into disuse. Now, however, the exchange is one of the prime vehicles for the privatization of state companies, and a centerpiece of the theocracy's reform program. One morning, I visited its headquarters, in a drab office block on Saadi Avenue, a main artery in the capital's business district.



"You've come a bit too early," a manager's assistant said as we began a tour of the facility. "The real activity usually takes place in the last hour of trading before we close at noon. It also may be a little slow today, because people are waiting to see what will happen with the elections."

By the standards of other world markets, the floor of the exchange could best be described as orderly. There were no bells, no shouting, no crowds; activity was limited to a low, polite murmur. Thirty-four brokers, all of them men, were registered to trade; most were sitting behind brass nameplates around long black wooden tables arranged in a rectangle; customers came to counters behind them to buy and sell. All transactions were written out by hand. On the mezzanine overlooking the floor, shareholders could monitor the trading—also handwritten, on big blackboards that hung from the balcony—if they could see around the potted palms, the exchange's principal decorating motif.

"You should buy some shares," the assistant said to me as we watched the trading. "You know, this is the one stock market in the world where values only go up."

I asked if foreigners were allowed to trade on the exchange.

"Of course," he said, looking at me with a puzzled expression. "Haven't you read about our new foreign investment?"

One of the cornerstones of Iran's 1979 constitution was Article 81, which stipulated, "Granting concessions to foreigners for establishing corporations and firms dealing with commercial, industrial, agricultural, mineral affairs, and services is absolutely prohibited." The revolutionaries were determined to prevent foreign profiteering and exploitation of Iran's assets. But among the economic reforms after Khomeini's death was a new investment law. Resurrected from the monarchy and then revised, it allowed foreigners to control forty-nine per cent of joint business ventures with Iran; it also allowed them to take their share of the profits out of the country. Passage of the law had broadly altered public attitudes toward the role of foreigners in the Islamic Republic.

In view of the enthusiasm of his sales pitch, I asked the assistant whether he had bought any shares.

"I didn't want to," he replied, grinning sheepishly. "But my wife insisted."

After the tour, I visited Allah Verdi Rajaee-Salmassi (the first two names mean "given by God"), the exchange's secretary-general, in his office, off the mezzanine. Seated at a desk under a large photograph of Khomeini, he was cheerfully optimistic about the future of the exchange. "The stock market is the symbol of change in Iran," he told me. "We now have more companies listed than before the revolution. We're up to a hundred and twenty-nine, and over the next two years we'll reach three hundred and ninety. Between ten and fifteen per cent of all the companies in Iran will join the exchange." The percentage would be so low, he explained, in large part because the government would retain control of strategic industries and oil; the petroleum industry was nationalized in 1951, and it accounts for the biggest share of Iran's businesses.

I asked Rajaee-Salmassi if it was true that the stocks on the Teheran exchange never went down.

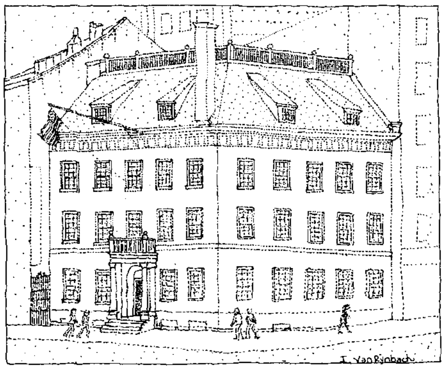
He laughed. "It's not forbidden for them to go down, but the vast majority do go up," he replied. Indeed, the value of the stocks sold in the first six months of 1991 was more than double that in all of 1990 and fifteen times that in all of 1989. "We started up the exchange again only after the government initiated the privatization program under its new five-year plan, and our goals are still modest," he said. "We were originally modelled on the Belgian stock exchange. Someday, maybe in another five years, we hope to be a middle-level market, maybe like Johannesburg."

In May, the exchange went high-tech when it moved to new premises. The chrome-glass-and-marble offices, on Hafez Avenue, are furnished with locally made furniture—one of Iran's new boom industries—and I.B.M. computers, bought in Holland. (The exchange's index is in English, since no software package has yet been translated into Farsi.) Soon, the exchange is planning to admit its first female broker.

Shortly before my visit, the exchange had overcome a major hurdle on the road to full acceptance. As one of the directors showed me through the new premises, he told me jubilantly, "About three months ago, we invited the mullahs to see the exchange, and twelve came to check it out. Then they went to Ayatollah Meshkini"—the head of the Assembly of Experts, which elects the Faqih—"and explained it to him. He said it was O.K., and the mullahs came back and told us that there was no religious conflict. We know it's true, because then they bought some shares!"

In the light of Iran's recent past, some of the government's other innovations are equally striking. After the American hostages were seized, in 1979, Iran scoffed at international economic sanctions. Now it is working with the International Monetary Fund, and on the I.M.F.'s advice has sharply reduced the national deficit, from fifty per cent of the budget in 1988 to just over ten per cent in 1991—a feat achieved, some say, with the help of accounting sleight of hand. During Iran's first revolutionary decade, the government had heavily subsidized basic commodities to help the *mostazafin.* Now the mullahs have introduced an Iranian version of shock therapy, to galvanize the stagnant economy and make it more competitive internationally. Subsidies for meat, chicken, sugar, and a host of other basic foodstuffs have been reduced, and the currency, which was artificially pegged throughout the eighties at sixty-seven rials to the dollar, is floating at various rates, up to fourteen hundred rials to the dollar. The old isolation has been replaced by three free-trade zones—two islands in the Persian Gulf and the port of Chahbar, on the Gulf of Oman—offering tax and customs exemptions to encourage foreign investment and trade.

Change is reshaping and redefining Teheran. At what had been abandoned building sites, I saw swarms of workers erecting new housing projects, private homes, government facilities, office blocks, and shopping malls. On the capital's motorways, I noticed sporty new Jaguars, Mitsubishi sedans, lots of Nissan four-wheel-drive jeeps, and even one or two 1992 Caprices—all highly conspicuous next to the small, boxy Iranian-made Paykans. Almost daily, the government announced a new trade deal or diplomatic tie: Iran Air added Kenya to its international routes (it now flies to more than twenty countries); a commercial pact to sell oil to Ukraine was concluded; new envoys to Mongolia presented their credentials; and plans were announced for the construction of a railway linking Iran and the former Soviet Central Asian republics—a project that could make Teheran a transportation hub in the region. Billboard space that had for years extolled the revolution or condemned the Greater and Lesser Satans was now advertising Dole fruits and Japanese electronics. Banners at Teheran's Great Bazaar announced, in English, a coming "International Exhibition of Finest Persian Carpets," and local newspapers advised American and European buyers where to go to pick up visas. Lotteries, which, like casinos, had been banned after the revolution, were coming back. Banks this spring were conducting a nationwide sweepstakes: anyone who made a new deposit of twenty thousand rials was eligible. New cars would go to the twenty winners; losers would get their money back, but without "dividends"—the term that Islamic banks use to avoid the prohibition on usury.

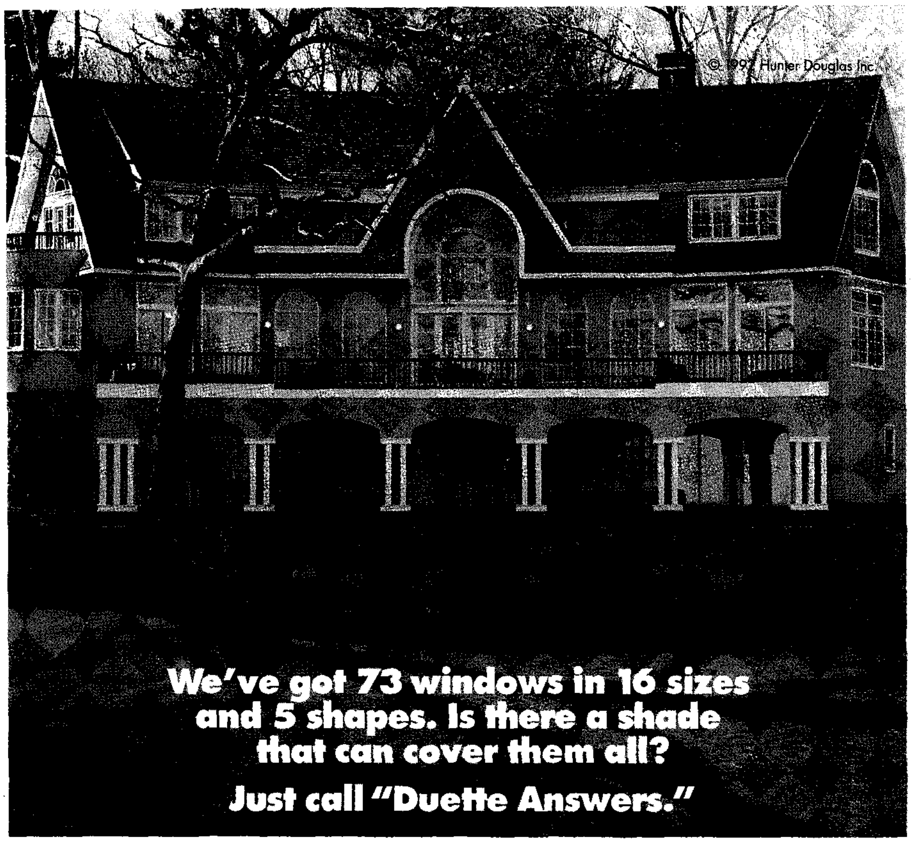


Even the revolution's Islamic essence is mellowing. At Teheran's City Theatre, I attended a rehearsal of Chekhov's "Uncle Vanya," which included a drinking scene. Recent movies made in Iran feature love stories and other non-Islamic themes; a couple of films about the war with Iraq have plots with endings far short of total victory. Even Islamic fashion has become an industry. To replace the drab black cotton roupoosh—a kind of housecoat that is an alternative to the all-enveloping chador—that I had worn on several previous trips, I bought a double-breasted roupoosh of black crêpe, with shoulder pads, epaulets, and raglan sleeves. I purchased it from an Iranian woman, who told me that she was glad to sell it. "That model's at least a year old," she said. I saw several women riding on the backs of motorcycles, their roupooshes occasionally flapping illicitly in the wind, and among the devout, who still wear the chador, I noticed a preference for Reeboks and other brand-name sneakers.

Many of the most vivid images of my previous trip had disappeared. The sandbags and crisscrossed tape put up to protect shop fronts and the windows of homes and office buildings were gone. The only troops I saw, from any military branch, were a few Revolutionary Guards posted at Khomeini's tomb and outside his house, in Jamaran, one of Teheran's wealthy northern suburbs. The endless run of TV documentaries on the valiant war effort had been replaced by Western films and television series. (One of my colleagues remarked on how odd it was to hear a Mississippi riverboat captain speaking Farsi.) The sole visible trace of the war was at Behesht-e Zahra, where I encountered mothers and widows making weekend trips to tend their men's graves.

In many ways, the Iranian capital is cleaner and more orderly than it has been at any time since the revolution. Since 1991, when the draconian *komitehs* were merged with the police force, the random roadblocks to check for illegal alcohol consumption or unmarried couples have disappeared. Gardens have been planted along the boulevards, and the powerful fragrance of violet, red, and white *shaboo*—hyacinth-like flowers whose name means "night smell"—often manages to cut through the city's air pollution. Drab, ill-tended parks have been revitalized with swings, slides, rocking horses, and sometimes small Ferris wheels and giant climbing toys, like a "Mother Goose" shoe. Sections of the sprawling capital have been color-coded: all the corrugated-metal doors and trim in one district were bright yellow, in another pale blue. Rocky stretches along the highways in the north and on the desert border in the south have been planted with saplings. Most of the political graffiti on the sides of buildings have been replaced with picturesque murals in bright colors, each bearing the slogan "Our City Is Our House."

The most extraordinary innovation, however, may well be Iran's heavily funded birth-control program, which ranks as one of the most successful in the Third World. Throughout the revolution's early years, and especially during the war, the leadership called on the faithful to breed a new Islamic generation. The population not only soared but almost doubled. From 1976 to 1986, the population growth rate rose from 2.7 per cent to 3.9 per cent—one of the highest in the world. Then the mullahs reversed course. An Iranian importer of pharmaceuticals explained the change to me. "It was a simple matter of arithmetic," he said. "The year before the revolution, the population was thirty-four million, and income from oil was about twenty billion dollars. Today, the population is almost sixty million, and income from oil is only sixteen billion to eighteen billion dollars. The government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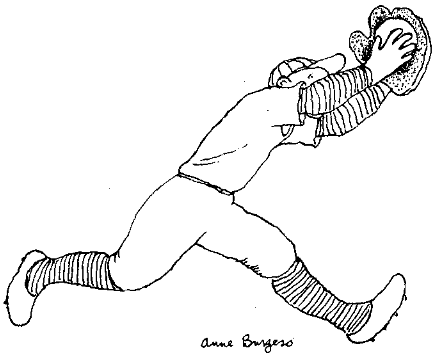
finally began to understand that there were not enough pieces of the pie for all the people we were breeding." The Health Ministry launched a nationwide campaign, and a prominent ayatollah issued a *fatwa*, or religious edict, advocating family planning. But the program languished, in part because the Prime Minister, a supporter of the nascent Ruhaniyoun, didn't back it. His post was eliminated in the 1989 government shakeup.

Dr. Mohsen Naghavi, a tall, slender general practitioner with a neat mustache, took me on a tour of the Badr Health Clinic, a pristine two-story facility in southern Teheran. "Seventy per cent of Iranian women now use contraceptives," he told me. "The pill, I.U.D.s, condoms, tubal ligations, vasectomies—everything is free. We don't teach rhythm, because it's not sure enough." The Badr Clinic's motto is "Fewer children, better life." To promote birth control, it last year began mobilizing a corps of women volunteers to go house-to-house in poor neighborhoods, where families tend to have the most children.

"We try to teach them, not preach to them," Dr. Naghavi told me. "We say that birth control is not mandatory. But we try to show them, in different ways, the importance of limiting population growth. We explain that it's better to have one healthy, educated Muslim than a hundred unhealthy, uneducated Muslims. Then we explain the possible harm of having a baby before the age of fifteen and after the age of thirty-five, and that it's better for the health of the baby and the mother to have a gap of three years between children. We also explain the economics. We have to import food and be dependent on other countries. And we also talk about defense. We explain that Iran is in a geostrategic zone. The country must pay a lot of money for defense, because of superpowers like the United States, who look at us with interest. We need a large military. But the larger the population, the more we have to spend on babies instead of on defense." According to Dr. Naghavi, the results of the birth-control program have surpassed the government's early projections, but he conceded that Iran still has a long way to go. "It took fifteen years, in the United States, to persuade people not to eat fats and oily foods," he said. "How can anyone expect us to solve this problem in a short time?" Nevertheless, in mid-April the Minister of Health made the astonishing claim that the population growth rate had been brought back down to 2.7 per cent; the new target is 2.3 per cent by the end of the century.

With Dr. Naghavi and two female doctors, I visited a class of the volunteers, who come to the clinic for weekly updates and to compare notes. The women, who were all dressed in either chadors or roupooshes, talked freely to me about their work: the initial hurdles, the problems of persuading men to limit family growth, their own early reluctance to practice birth control, the impact of the program on general family health care, and, not least, the new opportunities that birth control provided women for bettering their own lives. I could sense the beginnings of a women's-liberation movement in the room. One middle-aged woman told me, "This offers us a chance to participate in society, to get out of our houses, and to improve our personalities."

FOR all the changes in Iran, however, this spring few Teheranis were revelling in profit-taking, or enjoying the hope of the new season. A couple of days before the Majlis election, I joined a line of women and restless children outside the Qods Department Store, on Vali-e Asr Avenue, a tree-lined boulevard that cuts through the capital from the Elbourz foothills in the north to the edge of the southern desert. The line stretched around the corner and well down a side street; several of the women complained that they had been waiting for up to four hours. They had all come to Qods to buy chicken; since the reduction of government subsidies, the price of chicken has increased at least twelve hundred per cent, but because the store is subsidized by a national charity the price was almost a thousand rials less than at free-market stores. After the wait, however, each customer could take away only two frozen chickens, in small packages with pink labels, imported from Bulgaria.



"I can't afford twenty-three hundred rials for chicken," a middle-aged widow named Esmat said when I asked people why they were waiting. "Beef, lamb, chicken, eggs—everything has doubled over the last month. And that's on top of the increases the month before. But our salaries are fixed. So, either you wait in line at places like this or you eat less." A small crowd formed around me as other shoppers reeled off complaints about the price hikes.

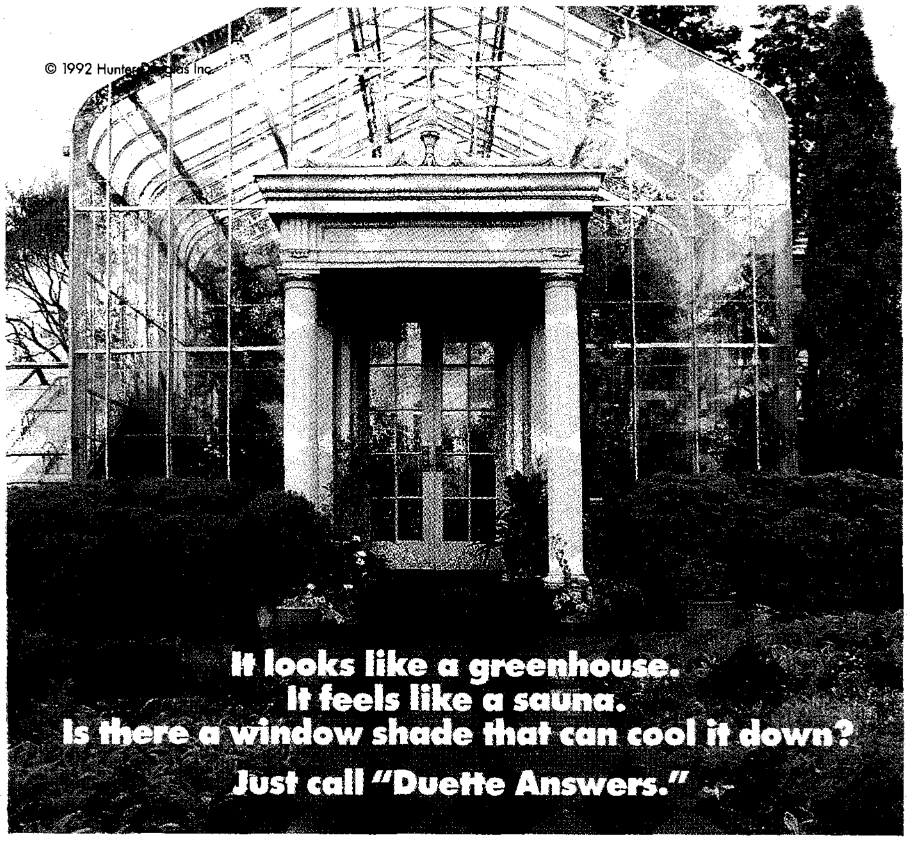
I asked the women how they felt about the coming election. A thirty-nine-year-old mother of two told me that she didn't plan to vote. "The election has no influence in my life," she said. "It won't make any difference." A teacher next to her chimed in, rather loudly, "They are lying to the people, so why should we go vote for them?" When I asked if she wasn't worried that someone might hear her, she responded, again loudly, "I don't care anymore. In fact, I wish they'd listen to what we have to say more often." A third woman made her way through the crowd to tell me, "We've waited thirteen years for something to happen. We expected so much, but now the revolution is failing us." She added softly, "We can't go on like this. We're tired of this life."

For more than a decade, the Qods Department Store has been one of my barometers of Iran's economic health. The last time I visited it, at the end of the war years, the shelves in the basement, where food is sold, had been pitifully bare—lots of ketchup, canned beans, and cheap plastic kitchen utensils, but little of substance. This spring, I was surprised to find the basement shelves jammed with packages of pasta and rice, cream-filled pastries, colorful spices, and row after row of canned fruits and vegetables; the quantity and choice hadn't been this good since before the revolution. The upper floors, too, had a wide selection of consumer goods: clothing, from girls' frilly frocks to jeans for all ages; bright silk flowers; rouge, lipstick, and eyeshadow; and toys galore. In one corner, big black-and-white stuffed pandas were stacked in a pyramid five feet high. I remarked on the abundance to one of the shoppers. "You don't understand," she replied, with the same irritation expressed by the women waiting in line for chicken. "Who can afford this stuff? Only the very wealthy. And I hear it's not so easy for them anymore, either."

A European envoy with long experience in Iran later remarked to me, "The kind of hardships here would cause envy in Russia and Africa. In Moscow, complaining about the price of tangerines would be a luxury." Nonetheless, the economic transition is painful. In 1991, per-capita income was estimated to be fourteen hundred dollars—less than half what it was on the eve of the revolution. This year, several economists told me, it has decreased further. As subsidies recede and prices shoot up, most civil servants, despite having received raises of as much as twenty-five per cent, find they are living below the poverty line.

Even the cost of making the hajj has gone up, and so has the amount of what is locally known as "blood money"—the compensation that drivers must pay if they kill or injure someone in a traffic accident. During election week, Iran's Supreme Judicial Council raised the price of compensation for loss of life in a traffic accident from six million to seventy million rials—almost fifty thousand dollars at the prevalent floating rate, but more than a million dollars at the old rate of sixty-seven rials, at which most people are still paid. Blood money for injuries or disability was also increased, to thirty million rials. The ruling caused a sensation in the desperately overcrowded capital, where the traffic can best be described as rhythmic chaos. The taxi-driver who took me from Teheran's international airport to my hotel ran thirteen red lights almost as if he hadn't seen them. "DRIVE SLOWLY. SEVENTY-MILLION-RIAL MEN ARE RUSHING ABOUT IN THE STREETS," a recent headline in one of the local newspapers warned. The day after the ruling, Teheran bus drivers refused to work until they were assured that blood money would be paid by the bus company.

It was not the first Iranian economic protest. Price hikes across the board have caused hundreds of slowdowns and small strikes nationwide as workers demand higher wages. Individually, these actions have been largely insignificant; collectively, they mark the beginning of a challenge potentially more serious than any political



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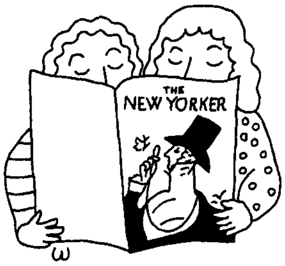

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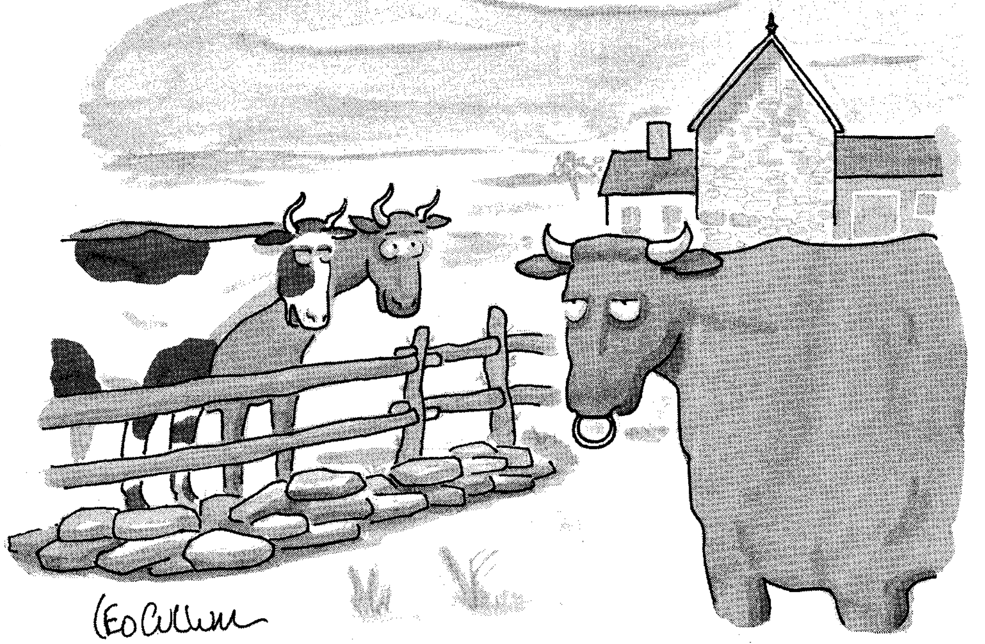


*"Be careful, Darlene. He's wearing a ring."*

• •

opposition. The key questions for the post-Khomeini leadership as it works toward both political and economic change are how far to move and how fast. The last Shah was forced to abandon the Peacock Throne in part because his attempts at modernization, the so-called White Revolution, imposed disruptive changes—about which ordinary Iranians had virtually no say—at an unacceptable pace. Now that the mullahs are coming to grips with many of the same modernization issues, they are facing many of the same problems. The pace and scope of change are particularly troublesome for Rafsanjani, whose first four-year term expires next year. He faces reëlection in July, 1993, for the second—and last—Presidential term allowed by the constitution.

When I left the department store, I stopped in at a bookstore whose proprietor is known as a thoughtful pundit on local affairs. I explained what I had just seen and heard.

"Ah, yes—don't I know," the proprietor responded. "People are more depressed now than during the war. The economic situation affects us in more ways. We had expected that when the war ended things would be better, but instead they're worse. You feel it in every aspect of life. This is a society that has always loved jokes. Through most of the revolution and the war years, people still told wonderful stories. In the end, we could laugh at our troubles. But I don't know how long it's been since I heard a new joke, or reheard an old one. Even parties are boring, because all that people can talk about is the economy. I'm the same way. Do you know that a set of tires now costs almost as much as you would have paid for a new car before the revolution? Chicken now is the same price as in Germany, but we're paid Third World salaries. And cars are more expensive than in Europe."

As a result, the long-standing tradition of petty bribery has become a mainstay of the economy. "We call it oiling the mustache," the bookstore owner explained. "This morning, I had to go to a notary public to get certification that I'd paid off a loan. He told me that I didn't have the right documents, and that I had to go back to the bank. So I did. But the bank official laughed at me and said I must be new at business, because I did have the right papers. He said the notary just wanted a bribe. By the time it was over, we did a lot of oiling. It's not an uncommon practice, but before the revolution you paid a little and you paid once. Now you have to pay a lot and to several people. Sometimes you can't blame them, because their salaries are so low. But it tells you a lot about the system."

I was, indeed, struck by the human hardship. On earlier visits, I had often seen men selling odds and ends on street corners, and occasionally I had seen beggars, but this time I saw young girls brave onrushing traffic on the main thoroughfares to peddle windshield wipers or chewing gum. Several of my old friends had taken second jobs, now almost a necessity among the middle and lower classes. A young teacher I met told me that she called in sick whenever she got a free-lance translation job—work that she needed in order to survive, even though she was living with her parents. A Jewish carpet dealer told me that he was very worried about his situation in Iran. I asked if he was referring to possible difficulties for Iranian Jews, some thirty thousand of whom are estimated to be living in the Islamic state. "No," he said, laughing. "This is my country, and I'm here to stay, as are most of the Jews I know. We're free to practice our faith at synagogues, in our schools, at our clubs. There are still plenty of kosher butchers, and the best health care is at the Jewish hospital. No, it's the economy that's killing me. I haven't had a sale in weeks."

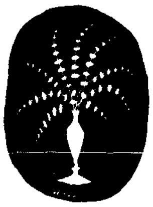
After the blood-money ruling, several Teheranis I met predicted, seriously, that the poor would soon be flinging themselves into the traffic to win blood-money compensation—preferably for injuries rather than death. Throughout the campaign, the Ruhaniyoun played to the widening social gap, calling for "vigilance" to prevent "society from being split into a well-off minority and a culturally and materially poor majority."

I asked the bookstore proprietor what all this meant for the revolution.

"I don't know whether the revolution has failed" was the reply. "But it certainly hasn't succeeded yet."

DURING election week, a Mideastern diplomat in Teheran recalled one of the post-Khomeini signals of change in Iranian foreign policy. Not long ago, he had noticed that the lights behind a large anti-American sign outside the old Hilton Hotel—now called the Esteqlal, or Independence—were out. On his next visit, he noticed that the whole sign was gone. At the former American Embassy compound, now a school for Revolutionary Guards, I found a similar shift—this one among ordinary Iranians. Revolutionary slogans, including "America Is Very Dangerous for Islam," were still on the compound wall, but in the compound's guestbook some of the latest entries were markedly different from the congratulatory messages of past years. "Why?" one visitor had written. "Why in the name of the God of the poor and the powerless, why have they thanked you so much?" Another entry read, "History will judge that these students were like a dam in the way of progress." During a morning I spent talking about the impending election with four carpet merchants at the Great Bazaar, I mentioned the "*Marg bar Amrika*" ("Death to America") chants that have echoed through the revolutionary era. "Achhh," one of the bazaaris said angrily. "That saying cost us a lot. It cost us everything. We should forget it forever." But the signals were often contradictory. The former Intercontinental Hotel (now called the Tulip), where I was staying, still had "Down with U.S.A." emblazoned on a wall of the lobby. And at Friday prayer services at Teheran University, Iranians were still shouting "*Marg bar Amrika!*" like the "Hallelujah" chorus.

"Oh, you Americans—you're so direct," an American-educated Iranian businessman said, with a laugh, when I asked him about the inconsistency. "Everything always has to be black and white. Here we're more subtle. Here everything is colored in various shades of gray. Yes, of course, everyone's talking about relations with the United States again. It's one of the implicit issues in the election. But relations are not going to be established overnight. It will come gradually, in stages. And it won't be the same as before. Even those of us who don't like the revolution want the United States to know that we intend to keep the independence we've achieved."

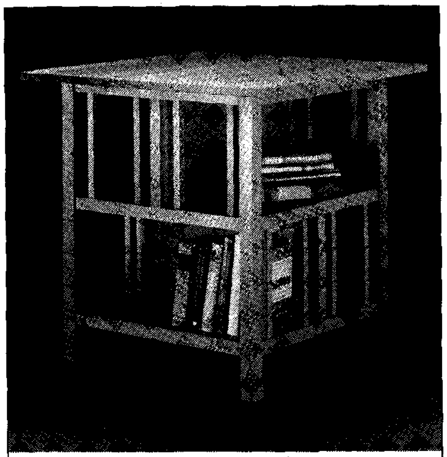


To better understand Iran's foreign policy, I stopped in at the Institute for Political and International Studies, the Foreign Ministry's think tank. It is located within walking distance of the Shah's old palace, and has recently been equipped to receive CNN. One of several senior analysts I spoke with was particularly candid about Iran's strategy in the post-Khomeini era. "Among our main goals is the normalization of relations with all countries—in the Gulf, Asia, Europe," he said. "We are now attempting to resolve those points which we consider obstacles with Western countries. We're pursuing them in line with economic reconstruction. If the election goes as expected, these goals and policies will be pursued with less domestic resistance. We should expect everything to speed up."

I asked him whether the release last year of American and British hostages in Lebanon marked a new direction in Iranian foreign policy.

"Is this era over?" he said. "This question is never going to have an answer. There's nothing that Iran can promise to the world. First, no country should even give an answer. Israel doesn't. The United States doesn't. Every country does what is in its national interests. Besides, you should be able to tell from our attitude and our actions whether or not there's change. Second, you'd never get an honest answer even if there was one. No government anywhere is going to give a guarantee, unless, like Iraq, it's been demolished—and even Iraq didn't tell the truth. Third, if a man was honest, it would destroy his domestic political base. Do you expect the President to get up and say, 'Yes, I'm sorry. It's over'? Why push to have an answer when you know it would never help?"

I then asked about the death sentence that Khomeini had pronounced on the British author Salman Rushdie, whom the Imam accused of blaspheming Islam in his novel "The Satanic Verses." The edict, which was proclaimed less than four months before Khomeini's death, is still in force, and its repercussions include the murder of the book's Japanese translator and the stabbing of its Italian translator. The edict remains a major barrier to the opening of normal relations with the West. Ironically, "The Satanic Verses" is not a hot issue in Teheran. (Almost everyone I spoke to was more angered by "Not Without My Daughter," Betty Mahmoody's book, which recounts the ordeal of an American woman, married to an Iranian, as she attempts to escape from Iran with their young daughter. Teheranis unanimously claimed that both the book and the film made from it grossly misportrayed Iranian culture and attitudes.) "I think the Imam's *fatwa* is taken more seriously in Egypt," the Iranian journalist, who had recently been in



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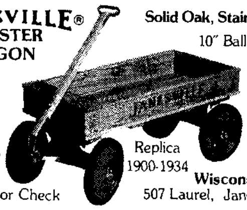

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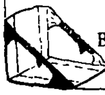

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Cairo, told me. "Copies of Rushdie's book have been smuggled into Iran, but basically no one here gives a damn about Rushdie. Rafsanjani would like to resolve this issue, but it's like going against the Pope on abortion."

Indeed, most Iranians accept the *fatwa* as a product of domestic rather than Islamic politics. It was pronounced at a time of mounting challenges. After the war with Iraq ended, in August of 1988, economic and political tensions grew worse rather than better. By February of 1989, when Iran marked the tenth anniversary of Khomeini's return from exile, revolutionary fervor was definitely flagging. To rally public support, the mullahs have often used crises and, in some cases, even created them. The furor over "The Satanic Verses" in Muslim communities in Asia, Europe, and Africa emboldened the mullahs to use it as a diversion from frustration and malaise at home. The book also offered a pretext for correcting the pragmatic postwar course being charted by Rafsanjani. Several Iranian officials admitted to me this spring that the Ayatollah had never read Rushdie's book; its contents had instead been summarized for him. But trying to revoke the edict would be costly. "Any Iranian leader who said 'Forget the *fatwa*' would risk his political—even his physical—survival," a prominent European ambassador told me. Like all the other diplomats I met this spring, he believed that the edict was an embarrassment to the current government, even though the new Faqih had on several occasions reaffirmed it.

The ambassador also told me that there had been attempts to find a way around the *fatwa* without appearing to defy Khomeini. "The basic idea was to get Iran to formally accept the rules of international law," he explained. "Rafsanjani said it first in a speech—although it was virtually hidden in the text." Then, he continued, in 1990 an Iranian delegation reached a compromise during talks with European Community representatives in Dublin, and agreed to sign a joint communiqué. "Iran said that it would respect the rules of international law, especially in the internal affairs of other countries," the ambassador continued. "By this it was understood that Teheran would not send anyone to London to kill a British citizen. That has helped Iran in its relations with the European Community. We both want to get rid of the problem. I've since been told several times by Iranian officials, 'We will never send someone to kill Rushdie.' "

I asked the ambassador if he felt that the agreement and the verbal reassurances were sufficient to remove the concern of European governments about violence stemming from the *fatwa*.

"Probably not," he replied.

The analyst at the Foreign Ministry's think tank seemed to understand that the international objections to Khomeini's edict were still very strong. He, too, mentioned the agreement with the Europeans in Dublin, and then said, "We're still working on the problem. At the moment, there's some new thinking going on. The reasoning—the new justification—is that Khomeini acted for religious reasons, and not on behalf of the state. Khomeini declared the punishment for what Rushdie did, based on existing law. I'm very bad at religious studies—but it was not a *fatwa*, it was a verdict. Khomeini did it apart from the government. He did it in a religious capacity, not as the head of state. If he had really wanted the government to kill Rushdie, why would he just declare the obvious verdict? He could have ordered a unit of Iran's Revolutionary Guards to carry it out. I'm not trying to defend him. But he was not thinking of killing Rushdie; he was trying to make a point, to defend a principle. He saw Rushdie's book as a threat to Islam, and he wanted to defend the Islamic state and stop the trend of attacking Islam and its essence. And he was damned successful at that! But he didn't really want to kill a man. He had nothing against Rushdie personally. One of Rushdie's earlier books won a prize here, just six or seven months before the verdict. If we want to find the real intention of the Imam, then we must reduce the issue to reality. This is something we will have to work out—like the hostages here and in Lebanon. I don't have the solution, but we have to work on it."

I remarked that Iran's claims of foreign-policy changes had credibility problems on several counts, including the assassination in Paris last year of Shahpour Bakhtiar, who had become Iran's Prime Minister in 1979 as part of the deal to get the Shah to leave the country. Bakhtiar's government lasted only thirty-nine days, and then he fled to exile in France. The Iranian government has repeatedly claimed that it is innocent of his murder. But American and British officials told me they had evidence that the assassins were Iranian—and not Iranian hard-liners out to discredit Rafsanjani and prevent rapprochement with France. "We've traced the assassination right up to the highest levels of government," an American official told me. In Teheran, another diplomat closely familiar with the case commented, "They consider knocking off a few opposition figures to be an internal affair. They're keen not to get caught, but they haven't changed their spots."

I repeated this to the Foreign Ministry analyst, and he reflected for a minute. "When I put all the data into my mind, I can't find a single rationale—at least, in terms of what we've been trying to do for the last three years," he said. "The experience of the first ten years is behind us. We were on the verge of full, normal diplomatic and economic relations with France. Mitterrand was scheduled to visit just two months later, and that was a very important step for this government. It was a signal of the extent to which we are changing. So Mitterrand delayed his trip, which was embarrassing for us. Bakhtiar's death is more of a threat than he was in life. So who had the motive? We're not idiots sitting at this table. I can't believe that we had a role in Bakhtiar's death."

I asked him about the bombing this year at the Israeli Embassy in Buenos Aires—an action that the Islamic Jihad, followers of the Iranian-backed Hezbollah in Lebanon, claimed to have carried out.

"Ah," he replied. "Hezbollah and Buenos Aires is another story. There's a motive there, and a line that follows. The bombing came right after the Israelis murdered the Hezbollah leader. Hezbollah may have had some outside help—I'm not sure that Iran would have risked it. But that group has its own capabilities—from the war in Lebanon, and from help a long time ago."

Various diplomats and Iranian officials told me that Teheran has cut back significantly on its financial aid to Hezbollah. At the same time, however, the sources said, Imad Mughniyeh, the Lebanese Shiite responsible for the abduction of Terry Anderson, Thomas Sutherland, and several other American and British hostages, has been given refuge in Teheran, with a house not far from the old Hilton and a construction job.

Finally, I asked the analyst about Iran's official intentions toward the United States, and prospects for renewed diplomatic ties after the election. Envoys who have acted as intermediaries between Washington and Teheran over the years have concurred that it would be a risky step for Rafsanjani, who has long been seen as sympathetic to such a move. "It's not like Nixon going to China," one of the envoys told me. Since the arms-for-hostages swap—in which Rafsanjani is believed to have played the pivotal behind-the-scenes role, though he never met Oliver North or Robert McFarlane during their secret mission to Teheran in 1986—his intentions have been suspect.

"There's already movement," the analyst responded. He told me that Iranian imports from the United States had tripled last year—though, because of American sanctions, Iran is able to sell very little to the United States. "In economic terms, we've removed the barriers for importing American goods to Iran," he said. "The Americans haven't done the same for us yet." A State Department official later confirmed that United States exports to Iran increased from a hundred and sixty-seven million dollars' worth in 1990 to more than five hundred and twenty-seven million dollars' worth in 1991. Trade is still a long way from the twenty-six-billion-dollar market of the Shah's era, but it's already enough to rank Washington as Teheran's sixth-largest trading partner.

"But my personal view is that something else has happened to the issue of relations over the past thirteen years," the analyst went on. "I don't think we need the United States anymore. If I were Rafsanjani's adviser and he asked me if we should open relations again, I would say that he would do it at a high cost domestically. He might say that we'll lose only five to ten per cent of support—which is negligible. It's true: it will probably not threaten the revolution to have relations with the United States. The revolution is now more established than ever. That's not too much of an issue. But then I would say, 'Why do we need the Americans now?' When Iraq was the regional power, we could have used the Americans. During the war with Iraq, we needed American spare parts for airplanes, and American missiles. When we were negotiating an end to the war, we could have used American influence. But the situation is very different now. We're rebuilding our military with help from the Russians, the East Europeans, and others. The Asians are helping us with reconstruction. Some make an argument that we need relations because the United States has a monopoly on oil equipment. But the international market is now more sophisticated than that. If you can get arms on the black market—or all those chemicals that Iraq got from Western companies—then you can easily get oil equipment. The only issue is the cost of intermediaries. We can get it. That's not an issue anymore.

"And even if we did have relations with the United States now, we certainly couldn't expect to get help or aid from the United States. Look at the Soviet Union. Gorbachev got nothing. How much did Eastern Europe get? Not much from the United States. There's only one surplus country, and that's Japan. And we have better relations with Japan and Europe now. That doesn't mean we shouldn't eventually open relations with Washington. But in talking about relations I have one question: Can America and Iran open relations and have them be normal? It's like a man and woman who get married and then divorce. Can they have the same level of relations afterward?"

ELECTION DAY, April 10th, was a bright spring day that in Teheran spanned the seasons—from searing heat in the arid southern suburbs to a few snowflakes and drops of cold rain in the foothills of the Elbourz, where skiers still had several feet of good powder. Elections are held on Friday, the Muslim Sabbath. It's the one day of the week when Teheran is almost tranquil and it doesn't take hours to get from one side of the capital to the other. Most of the big names voted early. Ayatollah Khamenei called on Iranians to vote as an Islamic duty. A mass turnout, he said, "would punch the mouths of idle prattlers and enemies of Islam and Muslims." President Rafsanjani told a press group assembled to watch him vote, "Never in the past have there been so many differences in points of view in our

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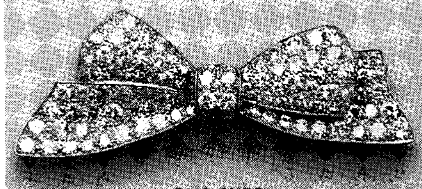

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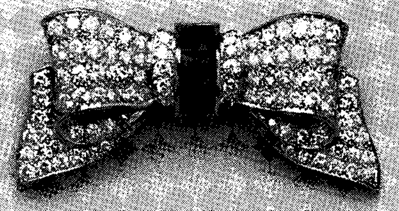

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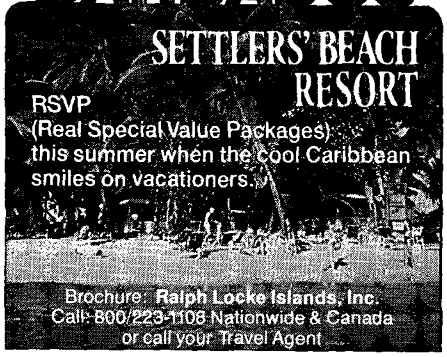

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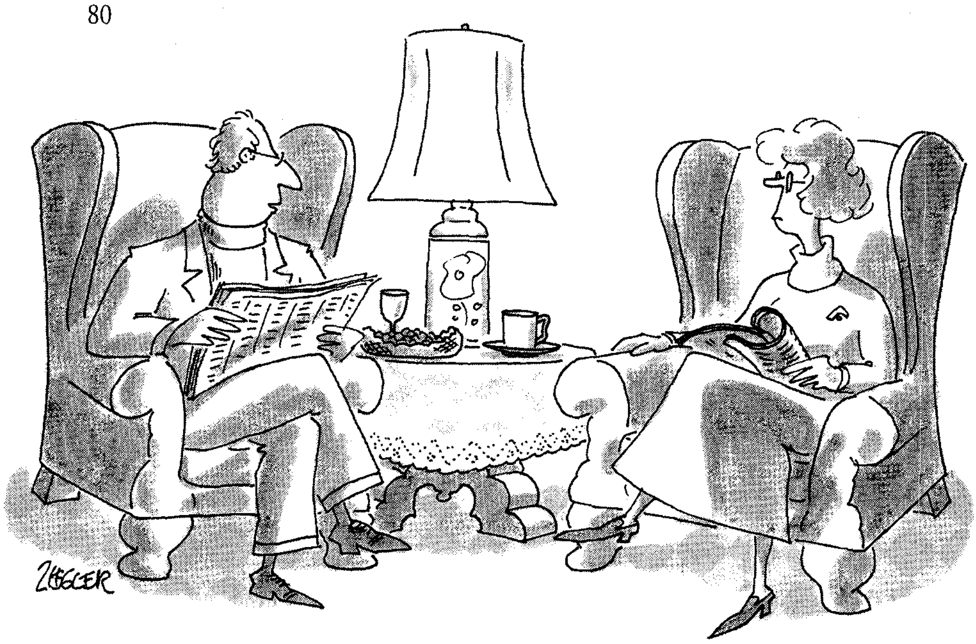


*"I can see by the sudden appearance of little dishes of hard candy in every room, Veronica, that we have finally entered our golden years."*

• •

society. Now the competition and opposition are intense." Hojatoleslam Mehdi Karrubi, the Majlis speaker and a leader of the Ruhaniyoun, had to wait an hour to cast his ballot; he had forgotten to bring his identity card, and an aide had to fetch it for him. Karrubi's wife was also running for the Majlis; she had been hastily nominated as a replacement for one of the disqualified Ruhaniyoun candidates. Karrubi was clearly bitter about the actions of the Council of Guardians. "It would have been better if sincere forces and those committed to the Islamic Revolution had not been barred," he told reporters.

I spent the day making the rounds of polling stations. With a friend, I went into one station, at a mosque, where men and women were voting in separate sections, and watched as my friend wrote two names on her ballot. Candidates' names had to be filled in by hand; ballots were then deposited in a sealed box. Muslim Teheranis were allowed to vote for as many as thirty of the hundred and sixty-six candidates in the capital—that is, their full quota of representation. A candidate needed to get thirty per cent of the vote to win; any seats that remained unfilled would be decided in a runoff. None of the voters I talked with, however, had voted for more than twenty-eight people, and most had voted for only a handful. The common refrain was "I don't know anything about the others."

In a country where half the adult population is illiterate, voters are permitted to have help. I saw several women conferring among themselves, nodding, then sitting down together to write out their votes. I later heard a story about a woman with a bouffant hairdo under a loosely tied scarf who was approached at a polling station by another female voter in similar dress. "You look like someone I'd agree with," the second woman was reported to have said. "Can you help me decide whom to vote for?" Not everyone voted for candidates. Several people reported that they had written down only one name: "Allah." With great glee, an ice-cream merchant told me that he'd written down two names: "Meat" and "Chicken."

Throughout the day, voters trickled through the polling stations. The largest crowd I saw was at the Armenian cathedral, where the line of people waiting to vote curved all the way around a large courtyard. At the Jewish Sports Club, I asked the supervisor why so many Jews were voting, when the candidate for the community's single seat in the Majlis was running unopposed. Sitting under pictures of Moses, Abraham, and Khomeini, he replied, "We want a large turnout, to be able to say that our representative has strong backing from the community." All over Teheran I saw banners declaring "It Is the Duty of Everyone to Vote to Fight the Enemy." But the turnout appeared to me to be low—an assessment shared by other members of the foreign press and by a wide assortment of diplomats who had conducted tours of polling stations.

I spent the morning in Shahpour, a poor southern suburb. One of the centers of activity there was a food bazaar; little stalls lined both sides of a central square. A dingy alley with more shops ran off to one side. In the alley, I asked an old vender, who was selling some potatoes he had piled on plastic bags on the ground, if he knew of a family that might be home.

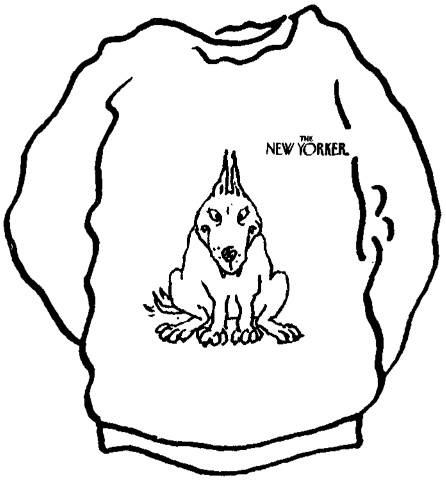
"There's a very poor family there," he said, pointing to a large hole in the alley wall.

As I ducked through the doorway, I almost tripped over a small cross-eyed boy with a drooling grin, who was rocking back and forth on his knees. His mother introduced herself as Zohreh and invited me in. Zohreh, who is thirty, lives with her husband and six children—four boys and two girls, aged five to fifteen—in two small rooms, with no furniture except an old television set. The apartment's walls, painted bright green and blue, were decorated with tinted family photographs. The single tap, cold water only, was outside. The apartment has no heat during the bitter Teheran winters and no cooling system during the steamy summers. I asked how all eight managed to sleep there. At night, Zohreh explained, they spread eight mats across the floor; they can fit, because two of the children are still small.

Two of Zohreh's teen-age boys are severely handicapped, mentally and physically. "We tried to get them into state institutions, but they wouldn't take them, because the children have two parents," she said. As we talked, the boys, thirteen and fourteen, crawled around in the next room; one had his trousers and underpants pulled down to his knees.

I asked Zohreh how she felt about the revolution. With a certain awe, she told me that she had seen Khomeini once, shortly after his return to Iran, when he visited her suburb. But she added that her life hadn't improved since 1979. On Election Day, she was worrying about finding a new place to live. "We have to move this summer," she explained. "They're going to tear down this building and put up a new apartment block. We pay ten thousand

# PUT ON THE DOG



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rials for rent, and we can't afford any more. I have no idea where we'll go." She said that her husband, a former construction worker, had become too frail to do heavy labor.

I asked her what he did now.

"Didn't you see him?" she asked. "He sells fruits and vegetables at the corner." The potato vender I had talked to was her husband; he looked at least seventy, but she told me that he was fifty-five.

On specific aspects of the revolution Zohreh deferred to her eldest son, fifteen-year-old Emran. Because the family has been so hard hit by the economic shock therapy, Emran, a lanky youth with the first dark hairs of a mustache above his lip, now sells vegetables along with his father. "He doesn't have enough time to study anymore," his mother said. "If he doesn't make it, then there's no hope for the rest of us." Like his siblings, Emran does not remember the monarchy. The majority of Iran's population is now under sixteen. Iran's baby-boom generation will, over the next two decades, become the largest bloc of voters. "The revolution has brought some good things and some bad," Emran told me, considering his words seriously. "No other country owns us anymore. But there aren't enough facilities for children to study, and there's not enough help with housing. We're going to be abandoned soon, because it's O.K. for people to make money and exploit the poor again"—a reference, apparently, to the private building boom going on throughout Teheran. "The revolution promised to take care of us," he concluded plaintively.

Indeed, despite the revolution's initial pledge to care for the *mostazafin*, resentment, particularly over housing shortages, is becoming visible among the poor. The theocracy's urban-renewal programs have targeted the illegal squatter settlements ringing several of Iran's largest cities—a product of the population boom, rural migration, and the influx of refugees from border areas during the war. The country's urban population has roughly doubled since the revolution; many cities can no longer cope with the numbers. Around the time of the election, at least three cities witnessed confrontations between municipal workers assigned to raze shantytowns and the poor who lived in them. In May, riots erupted in Mashhad, one of Iran's biggest cities and the site of its holiest shrine. To protest the evictions, the squatters—mainly unskilled workers employed in nearby factories—went on a rampage, burning automobiles, attacking banks, and looting government facilities. At least six were reported to have been killed and hundreds injured in the largest anti-government demonstration since the revolution.

Before leaving the tiny apartment, I asked Zohreh whom she favored in the election. She had kind words for Rafsanjani, but she said she hoped the Ruhaniyoun would win. Then I asked if she had voted. She said no. Zohreh's reaction reminded me of what an Iranian businessman had told me earlier. "Ten years ago, people were political," he said. "Now they don't have time for politics. They're just trying to survive."

AFTER the polls closed, election officials reported that almost nineteen million Iranians, or sixty-five per cent of the eligible voters, had cast their ballots; the government had said that it would be satisfied if eighteen million turned out. In the first round, just over half the Majlis seats were decided; the runoff election was held on May 8th. To practically no one's surprise, the Ruhaniyat swept both rounds. Teheran's press referred to the results as a "landslide."

The biggest casualties among the Ruhaniyoun were Mohammad Musavi Khoeiniha, who had blessed the American Embassy seizure; former Interior Minister Ali Akbar Mohtashami; and Speaker Mehdi Karrubi. Abolqasem Sarhadizadeh and Fakhreddin Hejazi also lost their seats. Among the winners were Mohammad Javad Larijani and nine women—more than twice the number in the previous parliament, and more than four times the number in the United States Senate. In the end, President Rafsanjani's supporters won seventy per cent of the seats in the new Majlis—a clear mandate to speed up reforms.

Iran's post-Khomeini leadership had seemingly been confident of victory. Even before the final votes were cast, the government announced changes in one of its newest laws. To fulfill loan conditions set by the I.M.F. and the World Bank, the government lifted the forty-nine-per-cent restriction on foreign investment. Outsiders may now put into Iran and take out of Iran as much as they want—an investment law even more liberal than those of the Shah's era.

ONE of the last polling stations I visited during the April vote was set up at the *husseiniyeh* next to Khomeini's house, in Jamaran, in the scenic Elbourz foothills. A *husseiniyeh* is a traditional Shiite social and mourning center, named after the seventh-century martyr Hussein. The Ayatollah made many of his most important speeches from a specially built balcony at the *husseiniyeh*.

Since shortly after the revolution, the main road into Jamaran has been well marked by a ten-foot model of Jerusalem's Dome of the Rock, the site, according to legend, of the Prophet Muhammad's ascent into Heaven. While Khomeini was alive, the road was cordoned off by Revolutionary Guards, and Jamaran residents often complained of having to go through car, body, and parcel searches every time they came home. Now the road is open, but several blocks surrounding Khomeini's house are still cordoned off, because many of the mullahs, both Ruhaniyat and Ruhaniyoun, have built large houses nearby. So I walked the last few blocks, along a street named for one of the war's martyrs; the air was crisply cool and refreshing after the heat in Shahpour.

Along the way, I saw two young men talking outside one of the houses. I stopped to ask directions, and they invited me in for tea. It was a big house, filled with overstuffed sofas and other expensive-looking furniture; they put a tape of American rock music on a cassette player. One of the young men told me that he was a chemistry student, and that his friend, a mechanical engineer, had become a furniture salesman, because engineers' salaries were too low. Both were in their mid-twenties. I asked them what they thought of the revolution, and they immediately changed the subject to the economy. "I'll have a university degree soon, but I don't have any possibilities for a job," the chemistry student said. "I'll probably end up selling cigarettes on the corner. You have to have at least three hundred million rials just to get a small house now. You have to find thirty thousand rials just to die. Both of us will end up living with our parents forever."

He also had no use for the mullahs. "All of them—they're corrupt," he said. "They tell people to live simply, but look at the houses around here. They live like kings." Resentment against the so-called Mercedes mullahs—those who have profited financially as well as politically during the theocratic rule—was a recurrent theme this spring.

I asked the two whom they favored in the election. Both said they would prefer the Ruhaniyat. I asked if they had voted yet. Both said no.

When I finally made my way up to the *husseiniyeh*, I found only a couple of people voting; the area looked almost deserted. From the street, I could see the roof of Khomeini's house behind a high metal gate. On an impulse, I asked one of the Revolutionary Guards if I might go inside. He hesitated, then shrugged and went to get the keys.

In stark contrast to the mansions in Jamaran, the Imam's home is small and simple—rather unimpressive. The exterior is of rough brick and has an unfinished look. The main salon, attached by a walkway to the *husseiniyeh*, contained only a couch, an ottoman, and an end table. Through most of his life, Khomeini preferred to sit on the floor; only in his later years did he need the support of a chair. On a small porch outside the salon was a five-foot-high black-and-white photograph of Khomeini. A vase of spring flowers was on the end table.

I remarked to the guard that I had been to the Ayatollah's tomb, but that I felt his empty home somehow had more finality to it.

"Yes," the guard replied. "And Iran will never be the same."

—ROBIN WRIGHT

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# THE THEATRE

## *The Price Is Half Right*

"IN spite of a pre-curtain pitch for funds, the Roundabout is no longer a worthy cause but in the big time at last, having wound up its first Broadway season with a hit." I wrote the foregoing during intermission, after the rollicking first act of Arthur Miller's "The Price," at the Criterion. Even though this was my third exposure to the play, I'd forgotten about the second act—an all-time joy killer. "The Price" is set—impressively set, by John Lee Beatty—on the "attic floor of a Manhattan brownstone," filled with pieces of heavy furniture and a harp and an old-fashioned Victrola. (In his review of the original production, in 1968, Brendan Gill pointed out that "brownstones don't have attics," but that was the least of it.) These furnishings were the property of a man, long dead, who had left them to his two grown sons, and now they must be sold or otherwise disposed of. The action starts with the entrance of one of the sons, Victor (Hector Elizondo), a policeman, and he is shortly joined by his wife, Esther (Debra Mooney). Both of them are sore at the other son, Walter, who is a well-to-do surgeon: they haven't seen him in years, and he doesn't even return their phone calls. Routine bickering chatter, and then Gregory Solomon (blessed Eli Wallach), an old furniture dealer, just this side of a vaudeville Jew, turns up. Mr. Wallach is the third Solomon I've seen (the others were Harold Gary and Joseph Buloff), but never before have I seen the part played with such richness and relish, with such comic savvy. And Mr. Elizondo's listening is almost as eloquent as Mr. Wallach's jokey dialogue. But at the beginning of the second act Mr. Solomon is sent off to the bedroom on some trumped-up excuse (Mr. Miller is not a great entrance-and-exit man), and with him go all the comedy and most of the life of the play.

For the rest of that act, Victor and Walter explore their resentment and dislike of each other, their confessions interlarded with the dramatist's usual deadly sermons. Family quarrelling and vindictiveness are a bore, onstage as well as off. Mr. Miller can be a bore, too, more often than not, but he did write that first act, and, in all fairness, it must be said that his observations about the Depression are interesting. Debra Mooney conveys Esther's mixture of loyalty and resentment very convincingly, and Joe Spano's tense, guilty Walter is entirely credible. John Tillinger directed. It wouldn't be a bad idea to see the first act of "The Price" and then call it quits.

IN "Spike Heels," at Second Stage, Theresa Rebeck has created four decent parts for, in this instance, four good actors, and pretty much left it at that. The setting is Boston, and the dramatis personae are Andrew (Tony Goldwyn), an academic writer and engaged man, far more interested than he should be in his upstairs neighbor; Georgie (Saundra Santiago), a rough-tongued, sexy, and combative young woman, socially beneath the Back Bay gentry around her, whom Andrew has placed in the job of secretary to his closest friend; a libidinous lawyer named Edward (Kevin Bacon); and, finally, Andrew's fiancée, Lydia (Julie White, in flats). The incident that sets emotions on the boil is Georgie's report that Edward has sexually harassed her and threatened to rape her. (There is presumably offstage action; little other than foot massage goes on before our eyes.) Michael Greif, who directed the earsplitting "Machinal," at the Public, is responsible for this thumping production. Why a conversation piece for four in a small Off Broadway theatre should be amplified at all is beyond me.

If there is a play here, I missed it, although all the appurtenances are in place: two very good settings, by James Youmans, as lighted by Kenneth Posner; a sprinkling of sharp lines; and, as I say, enjoyable and credible performances by all, and especially by Mr. Bacon, eyes alight with wickedness, tongue firmly in cheek.

—EDITH OLIVER

REPERTORY THEATRE
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## *Roar of the Greasepaint*

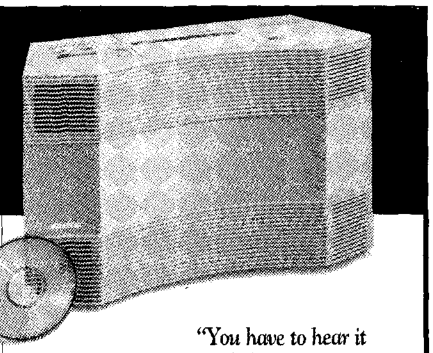
AT the gala performance of "Richard III" at the Brooklyn Academy of Music last week, the audience gave Charlotte Cornwell, as the Dowager Queen Elizabeth, a hand when she went offstage after her Act IV scene with Ian McKellen. That's the highly enjoyable scene in which Elizabeth gets to tell Richard off, so it may have been the scene itself the audience was applauding, but I'm pretty sure it was Ms. Cornwell. She's the only one doing that highly specific and stylish kind of Shakespearean acting that New York audiences so rarely get to watch. It's a treat to see Mr. McKellen, too, of course, even if his performance turns out to be a letdown—a star turn rather than an inspired one. It's more calculated than it is compelling or persuasive, more striking than telling or ingenious—which is to say, you're never remotely affected and never allowed to forget that you're in the presence of Great Acting. McKellen plays the withered-arm thing to the hilt, so to speak, making a great to-do out of managing this or that task one-handedly, but there's no particular persona developed and little of the revealing virtuosity he brought to his one-man show, "Acting Shakespeare," some years ago. This is showmanship of a less liberal (and liberating) variety.

For me, the production at BAM—which is directed by Richard Eyre, the director of the National Theatre (the *Royal* National Theatre, it's now called), and runs through the twenty-first, before going on to five other American cities—was a disappointment: lots of highly trained classical actors standing around shouting at each other. I greatly prefer the Royal Shakespeare Company style of production, in which the ensemble is equal in importance to that of any particular performance. The "Cyrano" and "Much Ado About Nothing" that played here in the mid-eighties (with Derek Jacobi, Sinead Cusack, and John Carlisle), the Chekhovian "All's Well That Ends Well" that played on Broadway the preceding year (with Margaret Tyzack and Harriet Walter), the "Love's Labour's Lost" and "Richard II" that Harvey Lichtenstein brought to BAM in the seventies—these were all R.S.C. productions, as, of course, was the famous Peter Brook "Midsummer Night's Dream," the production that started it all.

The problem with star-centered Shakespeare as the British serve it up is that it leaves the actors thinking they have nothing to do—which is to say, nothing to act. The star ends up playing the history of a role rather than the role itself—anything, just to be different—and the secondary characters mostly play to some antiquated notion of theatricality. Generally, this means that scene after scene moves from pompous pontification to mounting hysteria, until everyone is roaring at everyone else and every third word is unintelligible. A friend of mine calls this stay-awake Shakespeare: the duffers in the front row can't get a decent bit of shut-eye because somebody onstage keeps shouting.

Which is certainly what happens in the current instance. Mr. Eyre's production, designed by Bob Crowley and lighted by Jean Kalman, has ominous music by Dominic Muldowney and some of the most egregious performances I have ever seen from the touring company of a world-class theatre—prominent among them are Anastasia Hille's Lady Anne, Antonia Pemberton's Queen Margaret, and Peter Darling's Richmond. (The rest are merely out of Beyond the Fringe parody.) The production is set in the nineteen-thirties—an idea that goes nowhere, though it gives McKellen a chance to make Mussolini-like gestures and pattern his accent after BBC radio broadcasts. (Forget the Wars of the Roses.) I can't say that I see the point of transposing "Richard III" to a more contemporary setting if you're going to have all that ranting anyway. But you don't get anywhere telling the British how to do Shakespeare. They've seen it all and have done everything there is to do to the stuff—which is why they're churning out a gimmicky, star-centered production of an old chestnut like "Richard III" to begin with. They don't realize that for us the novelty would be seeing the play.

—MIMI KRAMER



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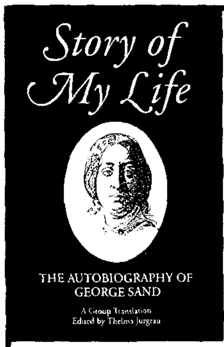

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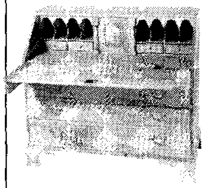

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# DANCING

## *In Pursuit of the New*

HOW to keep ballet a live and lively art? For most ballet companies around the world this is not a huge problem, because they are still catching up with Balanchine. But what seems the present and the future elsewhere is already the past for New York City Ballet, where Mr. B. created most of his choreography. What others are coming to terms with now—how to dance "Square Dance" or "Symphony in Three Movements"—City Ballet knew long ago.

In 1988, Peter Martins, City Ballet's ballet-master-in-chief, presented an American Music Festival. This included ballets already made for the company, by Balanchine, Martins, and Jerome Robbins, but primarily it presented new work. Martins himself made nine pieces, and numerous choreographers from inside and outside the company were invited to create dances. Two notable features were the number of modern-dance choreographers and the extensive use in several works of sets and costumes. But the festival was in most respects a failure. Now City Ballet has launched a Diamond Project, a workshop season of new choreography on a big scale. Its aim—true to City Ballet tradition—is to present choreography in the ballet idiom, giving priority to dance and music over costumes and décor. There's a narrowness of taste up at Lincoln Center these days. Ballet, ballet: the purity of the superrace must be maintained. Nor is the Diamond Project meant as the season's passing fancy: this initial venture may lead to others. Here I report on Diamond Project 1992. Eleven ballets, each by a different choreographer, received their premières in a four-day span last month.

The Diamond Project serves two obviously valuable functions: it allows choreographers within the company to make new work; it encourages choreographers from elsewhere to develop the dance style that is unique to City Ballet. What there is no need for is outside choreographers who make the kind of ballet that can be seen any old place. In that category were David Allan, Toni Pimble, John Alleyne, and Lynne Taylor-Corbett. They, presumably, did the best job they knew how. But why were they asked? What few steps Allan deals out to his dancers in "Reunions" (to Ernest Bloch's First Concerto Grosso) he sets on a big, bland, banal scale, with thumping repetitiousness and appalling lack of detail or contrast. In "Two's Company," to two orchestrated movements from a Dvořák string quartet, Pimble sets wave upon wave of dancers washing with twee effusiveness across the stage, until three of them, in a long and nebulous pas de trois, stay put long enough to illustrate the title ("three's none"). But the three are so moody and alike that I can't recall now which of the two men ended up with the heroine. Alleyne's "Bet Ann's Dance" is an empty assortment of drastic-classicism clichés modelled on the likes of William Forsythe, right down to the overhead lighting and (partly) taped music. Taylor-Corbett's "Mercury" is, a friend remarked, a good Joffrey ballet. A perky, dance-dance-dance affair, it uses a different star couple in each of its first four movements, then brings them together in the fifth. But when, soon after the second time I watched it, I listened at home to the three Haydn "Sturm und Drang" symphonies from which its music is taken, not one memory of the ballet came back. Each of these pieces owes something to Balanchine (precious little in the case of "Two's Company," which borrows more from Ashton; plenty in the case of "Bet Ann's Dance," since Balanchine is parent to all drastic classicism) and much to the City Ballet dancers. But that only works one way. City Ballet is none the richer.

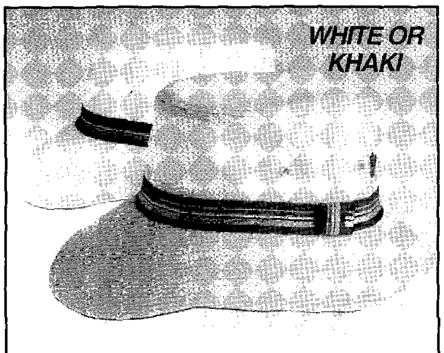
*"Then one day he said, 'It's either me or the damned cat!'"*

Three ballets by company members suffer from poor choices of music. Alexandre Proia's "Refractions" is set to Kamran Ince's "Before Infrared & Deep Flight"—music that, save for one Prokofievian half minute, attends far more to harmony and orchestration than to rhythm, and is therefore singularly inimical to dance. Proia is musical enough to sense this: his ballet is four-fifths posturing, one-fifth dance. The work's centerpiece consists of two contrasting pas de deux (after the example of "Stravinsky Violin Concerto"), and these show that Proia has enough craft to work partly against the music. The outer sections, which [illegible] the two leading couples at the hub of a larger ensemble, use ideas from "The Four Temperaments" and "Symphony in Three Movements." But the work is forever straining to rise through the thick storm clouds of its score. Robert LaFosse's "I Have My Own Room" is accompanied by a commissioned score by Eve Beglarian, partly for electronic cello, partly taped. This is dance music all right—jazz meets rock meets classical—but not ballet music, and LaFosse's choreography, full of Tharpisms, is an interesting essay in crossover style. (None of the other choreographers veered so far from the academic tradition.) It has a few gimmicks, but its heart is simply in its dancing, which hovers on the cusp of sports-related activities, and which shows the openness of spirit that is one of LaFosse's most amiable features as a performer. But though he made all his dancers look fresh and appealingly youthful, the material he gave them seemed interchangeable: you could have swapped Albert Evans and Ethan Stiefel without giving either of them new challenges. Bart Cook's "Flötezart," a ludicrously overchoreographed and flimsily structured effort to be classically pretty, takes not only Mozart's Flute Concerto K. 314 but also the Andante K. 315. "Flötezart" has an eye on the slow movement of "Concerto Barocco," the Theme and Variations sections of both "Divertimento No. 15" and "Mozartiana," and (fleetingly) the first movement of "Serenade": pure classical summits. But Cook hasn't the ear or the craft to climb the foothills, and when he tries to do something interesting to Mozart's long flute cadenzas he wades through hell. How those Mozart ballets keep coming! They're Salieri's revenge.

The central issue of the Diamond Project—how to keep ballet new—emerges in an essay that Martins himself contributed to the gala program. He opens by saying, "Classical ballet is a language—not a style—and its unique and extensive vocabulary consists of steps of varying shapes and sizes. They are the building blocks of the classical choreographer, no different than the notes of the musical staff for a composer, or the syllables of a poet." This formulation suggests an indifference to established style—to how the steps are done. Yes, a classical-ballet choreographer may break the rules, may give new accentuations and connections to known steps. But the reason ballet is ballet is that it has a style; and ballet's style begins with vertical stance and turnout of the limbs. And one reason for City Ballet's eminence is the particular features of its style: the body must be unmistakably turned out from its central axis, and not merely from the waist down; the weight must be on the front of the foot; the fifth position must be tightly closed. (These features weren't invented by Mr. B., but no one else in twentieth-century ballet gave them such emphasis.) Martins knows this, of course, far better than I do—yet the Diamond Project gave cause for concern here. Does Martins propose that City Ballet choreographers may ignore City Ballet style in quest of the new? Style, as we have understood it from the great dance classicists of our century, is the main subject of classical choreography.

A company's dance style will always be colored by its current choreographic tendency. Repertory shows that Martins believes in Richard Tanner and William Forsythe. Does he imagine them forming, with him, the triumvirate that will shape City Ballet's destiny? Let's hope not. Tanner's "Ancient Airs and Dances," chockablock with Balanchineana, might as well be called "Tombeau de Gesualdo Violin Concerto." For three male-female star couples and a small corps, and set to Respighi music, it's another mélange of academic prettinesses, studiously harmless and decorative. Yet the way it is danced shows that the academy is full of cobwebs. The three ballerinas—Heather Watts, Wendy Whelan, Valentina Kozlova—display a failure in turnout that is dismaying. Watts's style is now so heavy that to lift a leg as far as passé seems an effort. Whelan has a wild energy that may pass as attack, and Kozlova has a certain flippant charm and an ice skater's glamour—but neither has the rigorous grandeur to illumine her material. Tanner doesn't challenge weak dancers; he condones their weaknesses. The sketchy, coquettish dancing he encourages would be of little consequence, however, were it not closely related to the company's dancing elsewhere. All too often, the Diamond Project offerings reminded me of the dainty and underenergized look of many Balanchine ballets at the State Theatre lately. While other troupes are still learning how to dance Balanchine, City Ballet is forgetting.

"Herman Schmerman" is unmistakably a Forsythe production. Same overhead lighting, so harsh as to make its five virtuosos almost unrecognizable; same kind of taped rock-based music (commissioned from Thom Wil-



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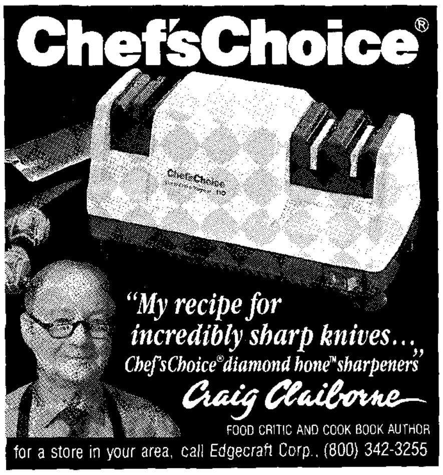
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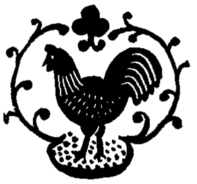
lems). But its dance vocab announces that it is Made for City Ballet: it has a stab at showing rhythmic delicacy, and it even has gargouillades. This doesn't, however, mitigate its basic mood. It's like a bel-canto aria written by Stockhausen. What goes on among its five dancers is neither coöperation nor combat; it's just perpetual irony—of a thoroughly aggressive and mordant type, as in all Forsythe's works. A choreographer's deployment of human energies adds up to his philosophy. Mr. B. brought human behavior to new extremes of tension in his Stravinsky and Hindemith creations, but he never negated the premise of ballet: that it is an art of chivalry. The premise of Forsythe's works, however, is tension without chivalry—worse, without apparent cause or even sincerity. The climate of his ballets is unremittingly acerbic and bleak. In fact, what they depict is an anti-world—the negative to ballet's positive.

Martins, in choosing to choreograph to "Jeu de Cartes," is the perfect diplomat. Here is the American Stravinsky, who was excluded from the American Music Festival, and this is one of the ballet scores omitted from City Ballet's two big Stravinsky Festivals, in '72 and '82. (Stravinsky wrote "Jeu de Cartes" for Balanchine's *first* Stravinsky Festival, in 1937; but Balanchine dropped it in the early fifties, not long after reviving it for City Ballet.) The new piece is the best Martins has created in several years, perhaps since the 1982 "Concerto for Two Solo Pianos." The rhythmic variety of Stravinsky's music brings out his finest instincts as a choreographer. The original "ballet in three deals" had a male joker appearing amid three separate poker hands; Martins has made a pure-dance composition. The three separate sections of the corps de ballet (in three color-coded uniforms) keep combining, parting, leaving, returning, in various ways throughout, and sometimes in subsections. There are three leading men, each in a different color. (Aren't City Ballet choreographers these days making too much fuss about color schemes, too little about costume cut and lighting?) Each man dances at times with the ballerina, Darci Kistler. (Balanchine's Joker was played by a woman on at least one occasion.) Everything demonstrates—to excess—that Martins knows more about how to construct an academic ballet than anyone else today. All that craft—and yet we can't tell why Martins makes ballets, or what he values in the academy. This is a time when ballet's classicism worldwide is in peril of shrinking into academicism, and Martins is one of the reasons that the distinction between the two is no longer obvious.

Choreography is about dancers. Kyra Nichols, who is surely at present the supreme classical dancer in the world, was in "Herman Schmerman," and she made no more impact than Wendy Whelan and Margaret Tracey. Forsythe doesn't know how to release the serene amplitude or brilliant command of a Nichols; he just works her remorselessly and ungratefully. Darci Kistler in "Jeu de Cartes" was a happier sight, and yet here, too, was a great dancer being forced against the grain. This is the second consecutive ballet in which Martins has squeezed Kistler into the kind of little allegro chatter that is currently her least congenial area. He keeps hemming her in with partnering, too. As with "Delight of the Muses," the post-Mozart piece he created in January, you long to see her shake off the men who intrude on her space; you long to see her expand by herself and hurl a few of her sunny thunderbolts through a clear sky—or at least stretch out a few flowing phrases and arabesques. But, though she has the ballet's central role, the exposure that Martins gives her is highly guarded—in contrast to the full-throttle material he gives her three male colleagues. Not that that dampened Kistler. "Jeu de Cartes" gave her nothing that the Stravinsky-Balanchine "Danses Concertantes" hadn't, but she bubbled and glowed in it. We are not seeing her on the high she reached two or more years ago—she is very gradually working her way back from another injury—but this showed her brightly in the ascendant. Nichol Hlinka, likewise, pounced ardently on what few opportunities "Mercury" gave her.

But no woman found the glory onstage that was won by Damian Woetzel, Peter Boal, Albert Evans, the happily recovered Jeffrey Edwards, and, most notably, the fast-rising Ethan Stiefel. I rejoice in these male dancers, but not in the choreography that gives them the upper hand. Classical ballet—if it is a style, and not merely a language—is a life in which man is consort, woman is monarch. This isn't a Balanchine invention; it began a century before "Apollo"—with Marie Taglioni, who was the first ballerina to make pointwork expressive, and whose turnout, by the way, was so complete that caricaturists loved to fix upon it. But no company taught us this more clearly than City Ballet. The Diamond Project wasn't any girl's best friend. The only choreographer of the season who seems to have set out to extend his ballerina is Cook. In "Flötezart" he doesn't know how to make Maria Calegari shape a firm phrase—neither does she anymore, alas—but he tests her stamina and shows pleasure in her wiry allure. No such concern seems to have occupied Martins, Tanner, or Forsythe. These guys all choreograph as if ballet would be just dandy—if it weren't for ballerinas.



Watching choreography by these three is like attending lectures on structure, history, the relations of the sexes, and much more—but it is never simply fun. The consciousness of craft and precedent that is all over their work marks them as postmodern balletmakers. (Tanner, though less smart-alecky than the others, is still archly formulaic.) In the last third of "Jeu de Cartes," Martins is so preoccupied with shunting groups of dancers on and off stage that he doesn't hear Stravinsky's most blatant musical joke—a direct quotation from Rossini's "Barber of Seville" overture. The first "Jeu de Cartes" was made during Balanchine's few years at the Metropolitan Opera, and Met audiences in the thirties would have been familiar enough with "The Barber" to laugh out loud on hearing such a crazy hello to Rossini. It still calls for a gag. (Even the unmusical John Cranko could hear this cue for clowning. In his version, the ambiguous Joker suddenly appears here in a crown and tutu.) But Martins, whose "Jeu de Cartes" bristles with his characteristically impersonal brand of humorless wit, just busies on past this quotation without any acknowledgment. His ballet was not helped by the way its score was played. Between the infiltration of taped scores (which can be death to musical performing) and the relentless deterioration of the orchestral playing, City Ballet today really is between the devil and the deep blue sea. Still, it should choose the latter every time. However slovenly the execution of the notes, a good conductor can at least impose firm rhythm. Every appearance at the State Theatre podium by Hugo Fiorato and Donald York is welcome.

It was a relief to find one work that didn't draw attention to its own cleverness. "Images," by Miriam Mahdaviani, is the kind of piece that is easy to pass over, and I don't single it out because it was flawless (it wasn't) or because it had a ballerina role (it didn't) or because it will in any way determine the future choreographic style of City Ballet (it won't). Still, it took delight in its dancers and its music. It was, in fact, the only ballet of the eleven that led me to hear its score more clearly. No mean feat. Its music, the "Gigues" from Debussy's "Images" and the "Nuages" and "Fêtes" from his "Nocturnes," is not easily choreographable; the dance element keeps flickering on and off. Mahdaviani, however, hears all its changing moods. When Debussy makes a quotation—"Gigues" quotes the British folk song "The Keel Row"—she shows us just as much British folk dance as the music calls for. Moreover, she knows what not to respond to—knows where Debussy's music adds scenic atmosphere without giving cause for movement. She also catches the music's naïve-primitive tone, connects it to Matisse's "La Danse" (felicitously evoked in choreographic patterns and in costumes), and creates a little thread of story about five women and five men, or maybe nymphs and satyrs, set against the young earth and sky. It's as if Debussy had designed each entry and each exit. There are times when the dance phrases are clumsy, when Mahdaviani cannot move her dancers from A to B in a satisfying flow of musical movement; and she does not always bring off her extensive use of parallel-leg movement handsomely. But amid this collection of insistently modish choreography the innocence of "Images" was very welcome. It did something that choreographers are often too sophisticated to bother with. It created its own world.

—Alastair Macaulay

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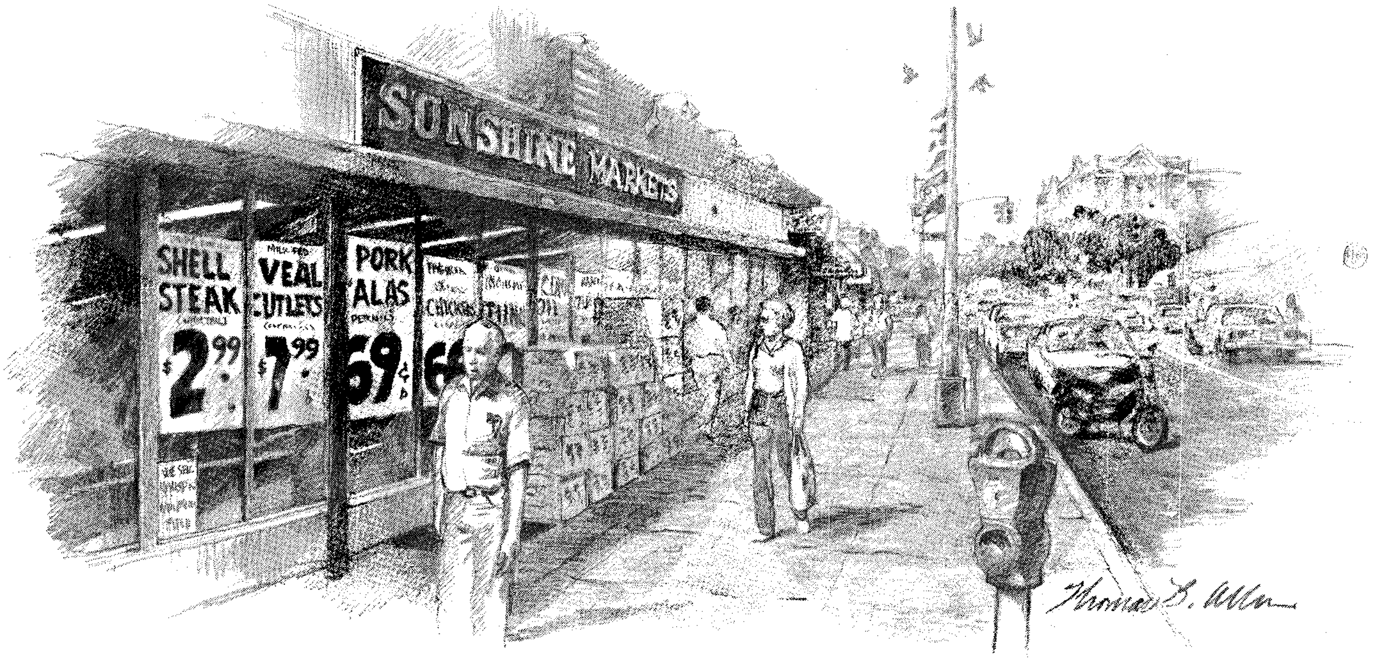
## ALL MIXED UP



THE people who shop at Sunshine Market, a grocery store in Jackson Heights, Queens, are thin and beautiful. They are also fat and plain, relaxed and frantic, Colombian, Italian, Jewish, Indian, African-American, Bolivian, Uruguayan, Vietnamese, young, middle-aged, elderly, rowdy, meek, cheerful, world-weary, rich, and broke. They buy health food. They buy Ding Dongs and Diet Coke. They have just come to America. They have lived in America, in Jackson Heights, in the same apartment, with the same furniture in the same arrangement, for sixty years. They are in a big hurry. They are in no rush and hoping to bump into their neighbors for a chat. They are in minks. They are in their pajamas, wearing stacks of hair curlers and no makeup. They are buying the works for a dinner party. They are buying a Lean Cuisine Chicken Fettucini to eat alone. They come in every single day and buy the same three things: a gallon of bottled water, a banana, a skinless boneless chicken breast. They come in once a week and weave up and down every aisle and arrive at the cash register, exhausted, with a tipsy heap of groceries. They are immigrants hunting for Goya Guanabana Nectar or Manischewitz Low Calorie Borscht or Trappey's Indi-Pep Pepper Sauce. They are immigrants who desire Planters Cheez Balls, Salerno Scooter-Pies, Maxwell House Coffee, Chef Boyardee Pac-Man Pasta in Spaghetti Sauce with Mini-Meat Balls, Count Chocula, Pringles potato crisps, Frank Sinatra's Marinara Sauce, Newman's Own Olive Oil and Vinegar Dressing, and a copy of the *Sun* ("WORLD'S SMALLEST MOM! She's Just 34 Inches Tall—But Has a 6-Foot Son!"). They do their shopping with their own red pushcarts, or with eco-conscious green string bags, or with their napping babies in Graco strollers, in which, if the baby is average-sized, they can also fit a small package of lean ground beef, half a dozen peaches, and two bars of Dove.

The people who shop at Sunshine Market are in touch with their needs. They march up to Toney Murphy, the store's manager, dozens of times a day and express themselves. This candidness has inspired Herb Spitzer, who owns Sunshine Market, to declare that the grocery business is the easiest business in the world, because the customers will tell you exactly what they want: "The yuppie, the Hispanic, the Asian, everyone knows how to say 'Do you have . . .' Everyone but the Irish, who for some reason don't like to say."

"I want birthday candles," a sharp-looking blond woman in a sheared-beaver jacket says to Toney Murphy one morning.

"I keep ordering them, and they keep not showing up."

"Well, O.K.," she says, looking at her groceries. "I'll make do with these." In her cart are three green peppers and a half gallon of milk.

A husky woman with a florid complexion stops Toney, laying a meaty hand on his shoulder. "Toney, I want the Bounce without the odor. You promised to get it. The smelly kind makes my daughter wheezy."

"Without the odor? I thought you said *with* the odor."

"No, not smelly, Toney. You know my Cheryl."

A man in a ragged windbreaker wants prayer candles. Aisle 8.

"Do you have sparkling cider?"

"Similac?"

"Aluminum foil?"

"Wasa Crisp Rye?"

"Salt? I mean, for the sidewalk."

Toney knows everything. Toney even knows some things he doesn't know, like Spanish. When the questions come to him in Spanish—half of Sunshine's shoppers are Hispanic—he makes up a genuine-sounding answer and points toward one aisle or another. Doing so, he conveys so much kindliness and benign authority that he is probably forgiven each time he directs a tuna-fish shopper into the thick of the English muffins. He would like to get it right, but at the moment he doesn't have time to take remedial Spanish. Anyhow, to be fair, given the neighborhood, he would also need remedial

Korean and Hindi and Russian and Vietnamese.

Irritated people with emphatic statements in any language gravitate toward Toney. A tiny woman with a puff of white hair lands on him one afternoon: "You owe me six dollars! I'm a cardiac and I don't want to get excited! I want what's due me! I know what I bought! I have evidence! I went home last night and called Washington to report this!"

"What did they tell you in Washington?" Toney asks.

"They told me to take it up with the manager," she says.

"I am the manager."

Now she freezes with surprise. He does look a little young and a little informal for the job. A light-skinned black man of thirty-five, Toney is slight and slump-shouldered, with a foxish, fine-featured face, a wispy mustache, a slicked-back ponytail, and a daily uniform of bluejeans, old tennis shoes, and a beat-up semi-official-looking blue smock. However, this is not the time to point out to Mrs. Potential Heart Attack that Toney has spent twenty years with Herb Spitzer—ten at Sunshine and, before that, ten at Food Pageant, Herb's previous store—and that he knows the store backward and forward. Instead, this is the time to expedite the encounter, because standing behind the woman now is a deliveryman with seventeen boxes of De An's pork products on a hand truck and the look on his face of a guy who is double-parked and is due some money.

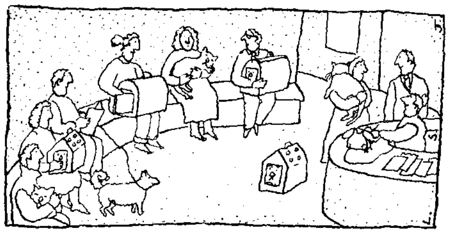
"Hey, Toney," the pork man says. "Let me know when you have a minute for us lowly delivery guys."

Toney counts out six dollars, and the woman leaves, trembling but not yet fibrillating. Watching her walk out, he mutters, "My first beer tonight is on her."

Crazy people gravitate toward Toney. He is often accosted by neighborhood schizophrenics, who ask him to inspect their groceries for embedded alien messages or government-authorized concealed poisons before they risk the checkout line. In part, this is because Toney is very approachable. But it's also true that crazy people just gravitate toward supermarkets, because even though supermarkets are private businesses, they provide a sort of semipublic sanctuary where anyone can do what a crazy person might want to do—that is, show up regularly, behave idiosyncratically, and spend untold hours roaming around. Supermarkets are complicated but simple, totally familiar but also strange, and full of big, orderly displays of discrete and interesting items—conditions particularly appealing to an eccentric mind, and ones that I found myself appreciating after spending several weeks at Sunshine Market.

Philosophically, Toney takes the position that the store has to tolerate things other businesses do not. In a place that provides something as basic as groceries, nearly every variety of customer and habit has to be accommodated. People who run supermarkets can, if they choose to, make something of this. They can attain a position of stewardship in their neighborhoods. Everyone knows them. Everyone sees them all the time. Everyone relies on them. They know weird details of everyone's life—who is on a diet and who has company for dinner and who makes a fetish of Chuckles Jelly Rings. Everyone is affected by a supermarket's failure or success: a neighborhood without a supermarket is on its way to not being a neighborhood anymore. Often the first places that people break into or burn down in riots are supermarkets—the rioters break in because supermarkets are full of desirable products, and they burn them down because grocery stores are so vital to a neighborhood that if they are run badly or exploitatively or meanly they are manifestly despised. Toney and Herb are of the stewardship school, which explains Toney's forbearance regarding nearly everything he encounters in the course of his workday, including messages from Mars in the groceries. "What are you going to do?" he once said to me. "Crazy or sane, everyone is entitled to have a grocery store."

NORTH of Thirty-seventh Avenue, two miles from Sunshine Market, is LaGuardia Airport. Airplanes sometimes circle over the store as they make their final landing approach. South of Thirty-seventh, one block away, is the No. 7 train, which runs on elevated tracks from Flushing to Manhattan, twenty-five feet in the air. Thirty-seventh Avenue is entirely earthbound. It is a main thoroughfare in Jackson Heights, but two people could play catch across it without getting winded. A cardiologist examining the avenue might recommend a bypass operation. There is a lane of traffic in each direction, a lane on each side for on-street parking, where there is usually a buildup of double- and triple-parked cars and trucks, and clots of pedestrians breaking apart at intersections and flowing into the street.



Almost all the buildings that line Thirty-seventh are squat block-long commercial rectangles that were built in the nineteen-twenties. Except for a few blocks here and there that were levelled during the sixties and then rebuilt with largish modern structures, the buildings on Thirty-seventh remain pleasingly uniform and old-fashioned, but over the years they have acquired plate-glass windows and aluminum façades; grates and security bars; long strings of multicolored plastic flags; and neon, plastic, and cardboard signs in English, Hindi, Korean, Vietnamese, Spanish, and Chinese. The array is dazzling. On most blocks, the boxy buildings are divided into several little businesses, so they end up looking like those long eight-packs of assorted Kellogg's cereals. Travelling on Thirty-seventh from the western edge of Jackson Heights (the Brooklyn-Queens Expressway) to the eastern edge (Junction Boulevard), among the places you would pass are Subzi Mandi Indo-Pak Grocery, Top Taste Chinese, Pizza Boy, La Uruguaya Bakery, The Ultimate Look, Oh Bok Jung Korean Restaurant, La Gata Golosa, Luigi's Italian Restaurant, Growing Farm, Chivito d'Oro, Different Ladies' Fashion, Familiar Pharmacy, and a store that is called Hello Kids on one sign, Hola Bebé on another, and something in Korean above the door.

Sunshine Market is on the block between Eighty-fifth and Eighty-sixth Streets. Next door is Kenny's Fish, which used to be run by a young Korean family and is now owned by Pakistanis but has a sign out front advertising "Pescado Frito." Two doors down is Anita Cassandra's Botanica La Milagrosa—a one-stop religious shop that sells Blessed Spray, Good Luck Bath, and Double Fast Luck Spray with Genuine Zodiac Oil. Next to the Botanica is Crystal Furniture. Up the block are J.C. Appliances, which is owned by Pakistani immigrants; Gemini II bar, which has one little dark window, mostly blocked by a neon Budweiser sign; and Winston Bagels, which has been on the corner since 1960. Across the street are Quality Farm, a Korean-owned greengrocer; Pic-a-Pak, an Italian butcher shop; Cavalier Restaurant, which has been open since 1950, and offers "Continental Cuisine and Romantic Live Piano Music"; Fermoselle Travel, which offers "Divorcios, Income Tax, Notario Publico, Inmigracion, Tickets"; Charles' Unisex Hairstylist, where you can get something done to you called "dimensional hair coloring"; and A. Wallshein, D.D.S.

Sunshine is the biggest store on the block. It looks like just about any grocery store anywhere: a big, unadorned, flat storefront, with two inset doors, divided by a thin metal handrail, and with huge plate-glass windows, which are always covered with paper signs advertising the week's specials. One week, some of the signs said:

"USDA Choice"
Shell Steak
(with Tail)
$2.99 lb.

Hard Slicing Tomatoes
"Ripe" 69¢ lb.

Sweet, Red Watermelon
29¢ lb.

Edy's Ice Cream
qt. cont.
All Flavors
$1.99

Fresh Pork Calas (Pernil)
69¢ lb.

Mazola Corn Oil
48 oz. Bottle
$1.99

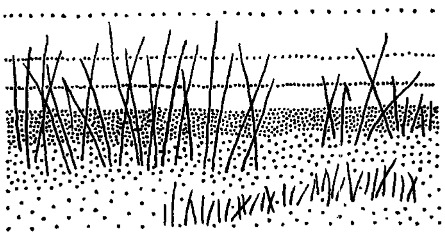
Scot Paper Towels
"Big Roll"
69¢ ea.

Breakstone Butter
Quarters
Sweet or Salt
½ lb. pkg. 78¢

Supermarket doors seem to have a magnetic field around them. At Sunshine, there are always a couple of people at the door, waiting for the bus, or looking for a taxi, or staying out of the rain, or thinking about going in, or thinking about coming out, or reading the bulletin board, which is along the outside wall to the left of the doors. The bulletin board makes good reading. This same week, there were notices for a lost pit bull ("Friendly Gentle 1-Yr. Old Male"), an available babysitter ("Señora Responsable Cuida Niños"), two tickets to Ecuador, and an entire collection of Bruce Lee posters and memorabilia for sale ("Includes Many Items Too Rare to List Here").

One Monday morning, I got to the market at seven-forty-five—fifteen minutes before opening time. There were already trucks from Polaner/B&G Pickles, Ingegneri & Son, Pepsi-Cola, Damascus Bakery, and Star Soap and Prayer Candle parked out front. The B&G driver, Wally Wadsworth, had started his morning at B&G's warehouse, in Roseland, New Jersey, and was delivering sweet gherkin midgets and kosher dills. Jimmy Penny, the Ingegneri driver, had come from a warehouse in the Bronx with fifty cases of assorted groceries. Ronnie Chamberlain and Chris Laluz had started in Long Island City and had Pepsi litres. Jim Hazar had come from the Damascus Bakery, in Brooklyn, with fresh pita bread. Manny Ziegelman, of Star Soap and Prayer Candle, had also come from Brooklyn. This particular morning, he had a mixed case of Miraculous Mother, Lucky Buddha, and Fast Luck prayer candles for Sunshine Market in his truck.

Traffic along most of Thirty-seventh was blocked. The delivery trucks took up all the parking spaces in front of the store. A solid line of cars sat in each traffic lane. Across the street, cars were parked at every meter, and a man double-parked in a piebald Mustang was reading the *News* in a state of leisurely repose; the cars moving down the street were forced around him, like a stream diverted around a rock. Another man was walking in the street between the parked cars and the moving cars, leading a scrawny, needle-nosed dog wearing a jewelled collar. On the sidewalk, five Asian kids were running toward Winston Bagels, which has pumpernickel bagels, garlic bialys, and five video games. Two elderly women were crossing from the entrance of an apartment building on Eighty-fifth Street toward the market. Both women were pushing Kadi-Carts—those fold-up rolling grocery carts that people in New York use, to make up for not having houses with driveways, large cars with trunks, or grocery stores with boys to carry the bags for them.



The man with a clipboard waiting for the deliveries at Sunshine was Bruce Reed. He has a silver crewcut and a poker face. Clustered behind him was a group of small Peruvian men. Bruce is the grocery manager. The small men are known among the people at Sunshine as the Peruvian Army. A few days a week, when Sunshine is receiving large grocery deliveries, the Peruvian Army is brought in to help open the boxes and put things on the shelves—to do what grocery people call packing out. Some Mondays, if the weekend was particularly busy, Bruce could use an airborne division.

On this Monday, Bruce walked over to the Ingegneri truck and peered in. Ronnie Chamberlain, walking past him with a loaded hand truck, craned his neck around his cases of Pepsi and said, "Hey, Bruce, help me out here. I got stuck with a million singles today. Everybody's giving me singles." Bruce ignored him. Wally, the pickle man, walked over and thrust at Bruce a batch of papers to be signed, acknowledging acceptance of delivery of five cases. Bruce scribbled on the forms, said goodbye to Wally, who would be back next Monday with more pickles, and then turned to the Ingegneri truck and began glancing at his clipboard. Jimmy Penny, the Ingegneri driver, stood inside the back of his truck looking down at Bruce. The boxes were stacked higher than his shoulders. He had one elbow resting on a case of Mazola and one on a case of paper towels. Finally, Bruce cleared his throat and said to Jimmy, "Well, well, well. O.K. Let's go."

As Jimmy started unloading cases, two more trucks pulled up—one from Coca-Cola and one from Wonder Bread. Jimmy kept unloading. The Army moved into position. The piebald Mustang pulled out, made a U-turn, and disappeared down the street. The store opened. Two more trucks pulled up—Coors and Hostess Cakes. The Wonder Bread guy and the Hostess Cakes guy waved to each other. Jimmy kept unloading cases.

Monday is the biggest delivery day; Friday is the second biggest. On a typical Monday, Krasdale, the wholesaler that is Sunshine's biggest supplier of groceries, delivers fifteen hundred cases; on a Friday, it delivers nearly a thousand. A store without enough stuff on its shelves is a store that isn't making money. Because Sunshine is small—only seven thousand square feet, compared with the industry average of at least thirty thousand—and has a limited amount of storage for extra inventory, it relies more than the average store on its orders and deliveries; what it has, it has on display.

It was a quarter to nine. Within a few minutes, Jimmy had to be on the road to Port Jersey to pick up another load from a grocery-distribution center. He hauled one more case of Mazola off the truck, and was finished. The result was a prodigious pile. People walking down the sidewalk had to inch their way around it. Jimmy pulled off his work gloves, stuck them under his arm, smoothed his hair under his cap, shifted his weight to one hip, put his gloves back on, sighed, looked at the pile, looked at Bruce, looked back at the pile, and then said, "Sorry, pal. I didn't mean to smother you with so much stuff."

ANYTHING in a supermarket that doesn't go away doesn't come back. This is especially true at a store like Sunshine, where each item has to be stocked, get sold, and be reordered regularly to make it worth having around. In grocery language, this process of coming and going is called a turn. Herb likes the whole store to average thirty turns a year, which means that every single thing in the store is ordered, unloaded, price-tagged, placed on a shelf, rung up at the cash register, bagged, and reordered an average of thirty times in fifty-two weeks. Different things turn at different rates. At Sunshine Market, milk makes three hundred and sixty-five turns a year. Ketchup, twenty-four bottles to a case, turns three cases a week.

At Sunshine Market, you can buy Hershey's Kisses, Kellogg's Corn Flakes, La Cena Ground Garlic, Manischewitz Dietetic Matzo-Thins, Goya Gandules Verdes, peaches, potatoes, beets, bananas, Charms Blo-Pops, Hellmann's Real Mayonnaise, Hellmann's Light Reduced Calorie Mayonnaise, Krasdale Cranberry Juice, Advanced Action Wisk, Ultra Bold, Sun-Maid raisins, Redpack Whole Tomatoes, Campbell's Cream of Chicken soup, Mighty Dog Sliced Chicken in Gravy, No-Cal Chocolate Soda, Luigi Vitelli Linguine, Charmin Free, Polly-O Lite Reduced Fat Ricotta, Hotel Bar butter, Wonder Bread, Hunt's Ketchup, French's Mustard, Morton's Salt, Brawny paper towels, Hungry-Man frozen dinners, Kleenex Man Size tissues, and Chore Boys, among many other things. In theory, if you took the number of things in the store and multiplied that number by the number of turns each item made in a year, you would know how many discrete units of stuff go in and out of the store in that year. This is only a theory. The truth is, no one knows exactly how many things there are inside Sunshine Market, so the math can't be done. Herb Spitzer once said that he thought there were about thirty-five hundred different items in the store. Bruce Reed once guessed ten thousand. Later, he revised his guess down to five thousand. You could drive yourself crazy trying to count all this stuff, because as soon as you started, something would be sold or would be thrown away, and you'd have to start over. Counting items in a supermarket would be like trying to count molecules in a river.

If you go into a supermarket under normal circumstances, you find what you need, you buy it, you take it home. But if you went into a supermarket sometime and just stood still you would, in the space of a minute or so, see someone coming in the door pushing a hand truck of full boxes; you would see someone in the aisles slicing open boxes and putting things on display; you would see customers putting in their baskets things that had just been packed out and arranged on the shelf; you would see someone in the back room feeding empty boxes into a trash compactor and then lugging them to a dumpster; you would see people moving their things through the checkout line and then carrying them away. In other words, you would be standing still in the middle of the river of things that flow in and out of the store all day.

It doesn't really matter how modern a store's refrigerators or its cash registers or its aisle displays are. On some level, the grocery business is just a clumsy, bulky, primitive enterprise that involves a great deal of stuff—stuff that weighs a lot, and takes up a lot of room, and has to be picked up and moved around a lot, and put in boxes,

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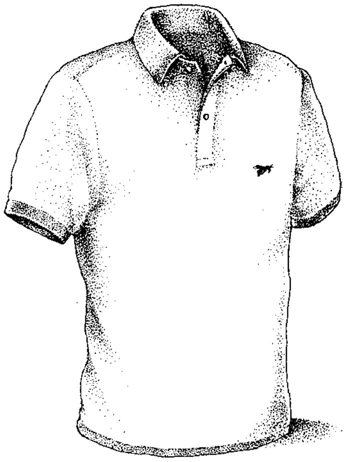

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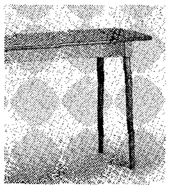

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and taken out of boxes and put on shelves, and then put in bags, just so someone can take some of it home and eat it. A manager of a grocery store once said to me that his store was like a house that was constantly being torn down by outsiders, and his job was to keep trying to rebuild it in the face of these hostile destroyers. I told this story to Herb, who said, "That's a man who doesn't love his job."

Three hundred venders bring things to Sunshine Market. Some of them own their own businesses. The nut guy is named Joseph Woo. He owns Bon Ami Nuts and Candy, in Flushing. Joseph drives his own truck to his accounts; he takes his own orders; he packs out his nuts at each store. Some of the venders are franchisees. The Coors and Canada Dry guy, Bobby Flynn, owns the franchise for Canada Dry in Queens and is the distributor for Coors. Like Joseph Woo, he drives his own truck; he takes his own orders; he packs out his cases at each store. Bobby Gonzales drives the Queens route for Coca-Cola—he is known at the store as Coke Bobby, to distinguish him from Coors-and-Canada-Dry Bobby. Coke Bobby drives, packs out, and takes orders for his boss, the local franchisee for Coke. There is also the Archway Cookie guy, the light-bulb-and-battery guy, the Pepperidge Farm guy, the Arnold's Bread guy, the Damascus-pita-bread guy—scores of guys who work for companies that want to make sure that their goods get into the store and are set up the way they want them to be. Other companies sell their products through big grocery wholesalers, like Krasdale and White Rose. Their products are included on a list of thousands of items that a store can order from the wholesaler, and they are delivered along with thousands of other things that the store orders every week.

Grocery stores love the companies that have guys who run their own routes. These guys work for their company, but in a sense they also work for the store. In fact, the drivers probably know the people at Sunshine and their other accounts better than they know the brass at Coke or Pepperidge Farm or Archway. Some of the drivers have been delivering to Sunshine since it opened—coming by once a week, or even once a day, for ten years. Most of the regular delivery guys knew when the wife of Angel Ruiz, who used to be the assistant manager, was pregnant, and asked after her. Sometimes a driver will meet somebody who works at a supermarket and they fall in love. This is what happened with the Pepperidge Farm guy and Rose Mary Cervantes, Sunshine Market's head cashier. They met while he was delivering a case of Mint Milanos. Some of the drivers who are on similar schedules also get to know one another. One day, I was standing near the Archway display, which is right next to the battery display. The Archway guy and the battery guy were both in the store that day, checking their merchandise. I heard the Archway guy saying, "So the guy sideswiped me, and I knew by just looking at him that he didn't have any insurance."

The battery guy said, "Hey, they never do."

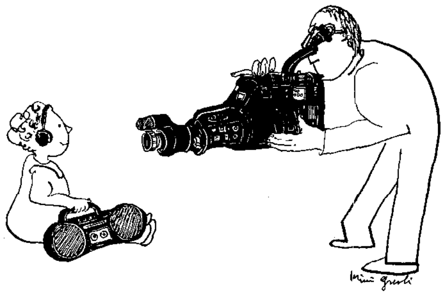
The Archway guy said, "Seriously, this is going to cost me a fortune." They both finished restocking their displays and left. Two days later, they were back in the store—apparently, Archway cookies and batteries turn at approximately the same rate—and I heard them pick up the conversation as if they'd never gone away.

"Anyway, I'm going to check with my insurance company."

"Yeah, maybe they can do something for you. Where were you when he hit you?"

"Right in the way."

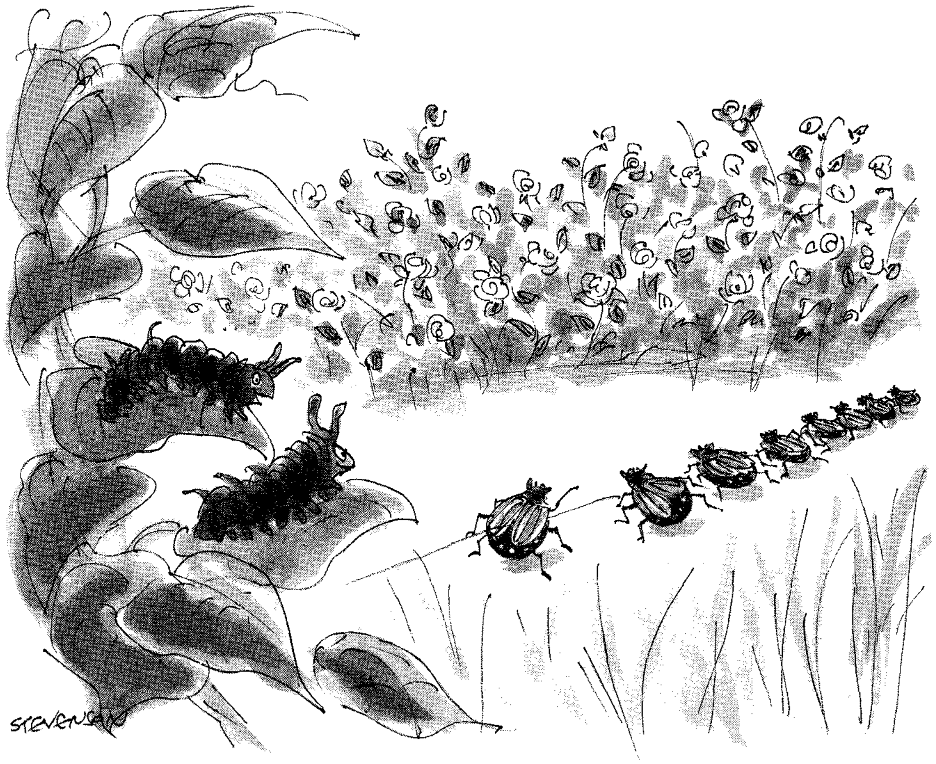
At one time, Herb knew the name of every single thing in the store. The most modern supermarkets now have electronic scanning cash registers, which record what has been sold and automatically note when something needs to be reordered. Sunshine doesn't have scanning cash registers, so Bruce walks the aisles with a scanner, which he runs across the bar code of anything that looks sparse. Then he plugs the scanner into a computer modem and transmits his orders to the computer at the wholesaler's. The scanner notwithstanding, Sunshine Market is still rather old-fashioned; for instance, José Aguilar, who orders the Goya products, the beer, and the dog food, and Toney, who orders everything else that the wholesalers don't carry, both do their ordering by the traditional clipboard method.



Toney once said that what he liked about the grocery business was the way you had to stash millions of details in your head, so that when you were faced with a decision—whether three Miraculous Mothers at a dollar fifty-nine apiece were enough to last until Manny Ziegelman of Star Soap and Prayer Candle came back, for example, and whether a dollar fifty-nine was a price attractive enough for the item to sell and also roomy enough to allow for a profit—you could rummage through your millions of details and come up with the right answer. The only way to learn these things is by being in the store day after day and learning them from someone like Herb, who has millions of such details already stashed away. Like all folklore, this information can't be recorded, really, because it's made up of details too particular and tiny; it can only be passed on, and in a cumulative way. For years, Toney spent his days at Herb's side, taking in everything Herb said. Someday, according to Herb, all supermarkets will have scanning cash registers, and the registers will transmit orders automatically to one central warehouse, and all products will be distributed from there. Then there will be no more Coke Bobbys and no more grocery owners who know what they sell and what isn't turning. There will just be one gigantic truck that will come every morning and drop cases and cases of groceries on the sidewalk and then drive away.

STANDING where Toney stands—the manager's elevated cockpit, which is to the right of the cash registers—you can see the eight aisles of the store splayed out in front of you, each topped with bright orange-and-yellow signs and lined with shelves packed with jars and boxes and bottles and bags and cans of every color and shape. Herb sits in an office above the dairy case at the back of the store. From the small window over his desk, he has the same view of the store that Toney does, but in reverse.

Toney and Herb met in 1972, when Toney was in high school and was bagging groceries for pinball money. Toney quickly showed aptitude for bagging and a knack for the business. Toney's father was an Air Force man who divorced Toney's mother and then disappeared from their lives. Herb has two sons: one is a landscape architect; the other is a writer. Maybe they were interested in the grocery business, or maybe they weren't; in any case, Herb was not interested in their being interested, because he considers the life of a groceryman to be harder than the life he worked so hard to provide for his sons. Upward mobility means giving your children the means to break away from you. But if you have nothing your children might also break away: most of the people who work at Sunshine come from places where money and opportunity were scarce, and, in looking for them, they had to leave their families behind. Herb's sons will never have pieces of paper on the wall over their desks saying "Banana Price Chart" and "Egg Deal"; Toney, on the other hand, came to Herb ready for adoption. For the last twenty years, the daily lives of Herb and Toney have been conjoined at the egg deals and the banana price charts and the millions of other details that flesh out a groceryman's life. Other than what they do all day, how they do it, what they know, what they worry about, and what they hope for, Herb and Toney have nothing in common. Toney often explains why he does things in the store the way he does by saying, "That's the way Herb does it, and I do it his way."



*"It's their big annual event—the Run for the Roses."*

• •

On the wall in his office, next to the banana chart, Herb has a plaque from the Harvest Lodge B'nai B'rith honoring his father, Louis: "A Founder and Pillar of the Food Industry." Louis Spitzer was a butcher in the Bronx. When Herb came out of the Army, in 1952, he went to work for his father, not out of any special love of meat but because he knew the business, thanks to his father, and getting in would be easy. "This industry has chapters and chapters of generations," Herb says. "It has always been an industry of bloodlines." At that time, the grocery business in New York was dominated by Italians and Jews, many of them immigrants. By 1962, the Spitzer father and son owned five meat markets, called either Commodore Market or Monarch Market. By 1971, Herb had parlayed the meat markets into a fifteen-store supermarket chain called Food Pageant, in Manhattan, Queens, and the South Bronx, where Herb ran the stores, Louis ran the produce and business departments, Herb's brother, Jerry, was in charge of the meat departments, and Herb's mother, Gertrude, mediated whenever they got in each other's way.

Jerry still works with Herb—he is the perishable-operations manager at Sunshine—but otherwise the Spitzer food-business lineage ends abruptly with Herb. A new lineage starts up with Toney Murphy, whose roots are in black South Carolina, whose mother and brother and sister are all nurses, and who came into the business more or less by accident but found in it an opportunity to work at a place he might someday have a chance to own. Herb is now sixty years old. He is a medium-sized man with a smooth, pinkish, egg-shaped face and a scramble of graying hair. He has a soothing, precise manner, which suggests benevolence and intelligence and absolutely no patience for goofing around. It is entirely possible to imagine that for years he worked like a dog. Since he turned sixty, he has kept shorter hours, has left more and more decisions to Toney, and has discovered the world of lunch. Once, he described Toney to me as his heir apparent; another time, he used the words "surrogate son." Some time ago, the two men made arrangements that will, when Herb is ready, transfer ownership of the store to Toney. Toney's wife, Donna, is a travel coördinator for an ad agency. When they met, she was working as a part-time cashier at Sunshine. They live in Jamaica Estates and have two sons and a daughter. The oldest, Jason, is ten. He likes coming to the store. Now that he is big enough, Toney is teaching him how to bag.

ARNIE THE SINGLES GUY comes to Sunshine Market once or twice a day and is rarely dressed for the weather. He is grizzle-haired, oldish, nutty-looking, and apparently tough as nails. The day I met Arnie the Singles Guy, he was wearing a cotton fatigue jacket and cotton-twill hot pants. It was pouring outside. He bounded into Sunshine, fished around in his fatigue jacket, and finally pulled out a loaf-size wad of singles. Toney weighed the loaf on a scale in his office and then traded him a set of ten- and twenty-dollar bills for it. Arnie is the Stonehenge of Thirty-seventh Avenue: he has a clearly discernible function, but no one can quite explain how he got there or why. It is generally assumed that he lives in the neighborhood and is retired from some other job. Currently,

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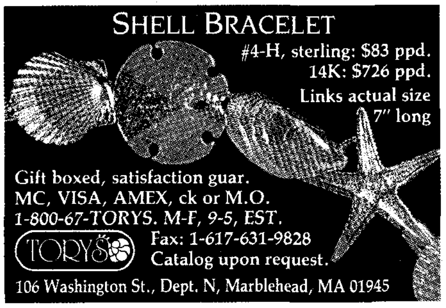

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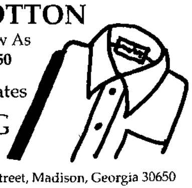
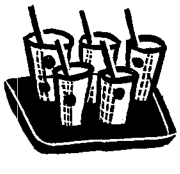


Treadwell Shirt Co., 231 Hancock Street, Madison, Georgia 30650

he is in the financial-services business. Once or twice a day, he travels a two-block route from Kelly's Luncheonette to Winston Bagels, and then doubles back to Sunshine, collecting singles from the stores that have too many and trading them to the stores that don't have enough.

Tons of money come in and out of a supermarket in the course of a day. This is a figure of speech. Literally, though, pounds and pounds of it accumulate, and eventually everyone working in the store gets sick of fanning through it and counting it and managing the sheer bulk of it. Confronted with so much money—that is, the raw physical actuality of cash—people working in a supermarket often develop a rather cavalier manner with it, bunching it up, whipping it out of the cash registers, snapping rubber bands around it as if it were trash. I had the feeling that Toney gets a particular charge out of tossing the bales of dollars onto the scale as if they were hay rather than the most important thing in the world. This is not to say that every dollar isn't counted, and carefully—just that in these quantities money seems like nothing special, merely another product that arrives at the store in bulk. The only other people in this neighborhood who are equally unceremonious about money are drug dealers, who come into the store wearing hand-tooled Tony Lama cowboy boots and Gianni Versace blazers and buy their little bags of Doritos and single-serving guava nectars with five-hundred-dollar bills.

In truth, very little of the money that comes into a supermarket stays. The industry standard for gross profits is twenty-three and a half per cent, and for net just one-half of one per cent. Markups on most things are tiny. Money made is quantified in terms of pennies and dollars per cubic foot of shelf space, or cubage. Prepared foods and salad bars and extra non-food services are the new big money-makers in the grocery business, but there is no room for these at Sunshine; in fact, there is barely room for the small, free-standing chicken rotisserie, which is in the back, beside the Jell-O shelves.



Most of the thirty-one thousand grocery stores in this country are part of chains. Sunshine is an anachronism—a single-location independently owned and operated grocery store. When Herb started in the business, more stores were independently owned. "I'm from a past generation," he says. "Nowadays, I have less in common with the guy who runs a chain supermarket, whose ordering and decisions are made for him at some central office, than I do with the little fellow who runs his own bodega."

When Sunshine opened, in 1982, it took over a space vacated by a store called King Kullen, which had gone out of business. Since then, fifteen other grocery stores in the neighborhood have either closed or changed hands. There are still a lot of supermarkets. These days, there are a Shop Wise and four Key Foods within a ten-block radius of Sunshine. Directly across the street are Pic-a-Pak and Quality Farm. Everything they sell, Sunshine sells, too.

There are about fifty thousand households in the neighborhood. The trick in the grocery business is to get most of these people in the door, and not to allow spoilage and theft and taxes and employee costs and competition to eat up the one-half of one per cent net profit. Herb, having presided over the rise and fall of Food Pageant, knows that it is not an easy trick. "As the economy of Queens and the South Bronx soured, so did the fortunes of Food Pageant," Herb says. He is now content with one busy store, as long as it remains busy. Sunshine has one of the highest sales-per-square-foot ratios in the city. "We rely on volume," he says. "We pump an incredible number of people through. There is never a hassle here. Also, we understand refrigeration."

Everything about a supermarket looks plain and uncontrived, because everything is commonplace and staple. But if you ran a business that had a profit margin of one-half of one per cent, you would prefer that the customer coming in with plans to buy only a gallon of milk ($2.59) leave with a gallon of milk ($2.59), a can of Nestle Quik ($4.19), a bag of Chips Ahoy ($3.19), a half gallon of Pride & Joy vanilla fudge ice cream ($2.49), and a week's supply of Ultra Slim-Fast Strawberry Supreme ($3.99). There is a science to doing this. You put the produce in front, because studies show that produce is the most important factor in determining where people shop. The milk is in the back, because everyone buys milk, and having it there insures that everyone traverses the entire store. Cheap things that don't make much money for the store are on the bottom shelves; money-makers—which might have a markup of twenty or thirty per cent—are on the shelves at eye level, a position that can increase sales by fifty per cent. People are drawn to the big displays at the ends of the aisles, which are usually made up of goods that the manufacturer has sold to the store at a promotional price. Some stores pack their shelves to the edge, and have stock boys roaming the aisles all day and filling in every hole. Herb believes that items sell better when the shelf is a little ragged. Toney is constantly walking through the aisles disarranging a few cans and boxes here and there. "If it's too neat, no one wants to be the one to mess it up," he says. "The only thing that pretty sells is dresses."

Most of the time, people who work in grocery stores do not suffer from inferiority complexes. They don't look around the store and wonder if they happen to be carrying the things people want. Americans visit grocery stores more than they visit any other kind of retail establishment—almost two and a half times a week, for between thirty-five and forty minutes per visit, which is an hour and a half every week, total, and three full days, cumulatively, each year. According to Toney, Sunshine Market has never, ever been entirely empty of customers since the day it opened. Grocery stores can be badly managed or poorly situated or undercut by the competition, but as a general rule they are popular places. Of course, rules are made to be broken. Angel Ruiz once quit his job at Sunshine and moved to Pompano Beach, Florida, and bought a supermarket there. Everything about the place suggested clover. What happened instead was, and remains, a mystery. Day after day, no one came into the store. Angel couldn't even get anyone to come in and buy a pack of cigarettes. Eventually, he lost all his money. Then he returned to New York and got his job back at Sunshine.

ALL kinds of people from all over the world come to live in Jackson Heights. Most of them have jobs and homes and regular lives. Some of them move here and get into trouble. One day, coming back to my car after a day at Sunshine, I saw a twenty-dollar bill stuck on my windshield. When I picked it up, I saw that it wasn't money at all. It was a little leaflet that was printed on one side to look like a twenty; the other side had a photograph of a woman with a big rump jutting out of a little pair of underpants, and underneath the photograph was a message about how unsuccessful she'd been in satisfying her prodigious sexual desires and how anyone who empathized and wanted to address the problem with her could call a number printed at the bottom of the page. A few days before, the *Times* had run a story saying that Roosevelt Avenue had become the city's largest prostitution center outside Manhattan, and that brothels staffed with South American and Asian girls were operating all along it.

In the mid-eighties, police noted that thousands of Chinese immigrants, many of them illegal, were moving into neighborhoods in Queens, including Jackson Heights, and were establishing criminal organizations, known as tongs, whose roots could be traced back to the eighteen-fifties. Around the same time, members of the Shining Path, the Peruvian Maoist terrorist group, were rumored to have established their North American headquarters in Jackson Heights. Also in the eighties, it became widely known that Jackson Heights was one of the most important centers for Colombian cocaine traffic in this country; called "the colony" by Colombians in the drug business, Jackson Heights has since had an enormous volume of drug trade and drug-related crimes. In August, 1990, a thirty-six-year-old woman was killed and her two companions were injured in a gangland shooting at the corner of Roosevelt Avenue and Seventy-ninth Street, a corner that local police called "a known drug location." And in March, 1992, a journalist named Manuel de Dios Unanue, the Cuban-born former editor of *El Diario-La Prensa*, who often reported on drug cartels, many of them operating out of Jackson Heights, and on political corruption, was shot twice in the back of the head and killed while eating dinner at Mesón Asturias, one of a dozen Argentine restaurants in the neighborhood.

Jackson Heights used to be a region of productive farms, part of an area known as Newtown. In 1909, Edward A. MacDougall, a real-estate developer, began buying land in the area, and later renamed it in honor of John Jackson, the president of the Hunters Point and Flushing Turnpike Company. The apartment houses MacDougall developed were innovative. Many were built European style, with a square block of apartments enclosing a garden courtyard. And many of the buildings had automatic elevators, which meant that they could be six stories high, instead of the five then standard in Queens. Also, MacDougall offered the apartments for collective ownership; they were among the first co-op apartments in America. Between 1920 and 1930, Jackson Heights was said to be the fastest-growing community in the country. Charlie Chaplin once lived in Jackson Heights, and so did Douglas Fairbanks, Sr., but by and large the neighborhood consisted of middle-class Italians, Irish, and Jews until 1965, when immigration quotas were loosened and thousands of South and Central Americans, Koreans, Indians, Chinese, and Southeast Asians came to the United States. Jackson Heights, which was generally quieter, cleaner, safer, and prettier than similarly inexpensive neighborhoods in Manhattan, Brooklyn, or the Bronx, held great appeal.

Jackson Heights now has a hundred and twenty-nine thousand residents. Twenty-eight per cent are white; forty-three per cent are Hispanic; fifteen and a half per cent are black; eleven and a half per cent are Asian. More than half of the ninety-four thousand Indians in New York City live in Queens—mainly in Jackson Heights and Flushing. Soviet immigrants are forming a settlement in the neighborhood. There is a chain of Uruguayan bakeries on Thirty-seventh Avenue. Jackson Heights is the de-facto capital of the Argentine community in the United States. In some ways, the various nationalities have blended together, but in other ways, even in this small, crowded space, they have managed to remain clearly articulated. A sari shop and a Dominican diner side by side on the same block can still manage to feel ten thousand miles apart.

One morning, I was riding in a taxi

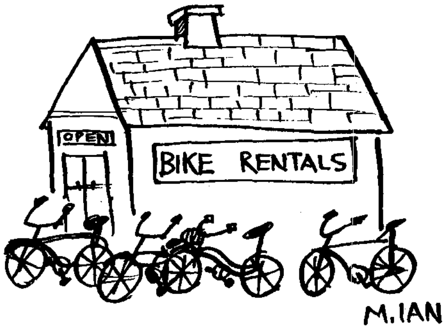
and struck up a conversation with the driver. He was a black man, native to New York, and it turned out that he had recently moved to Jackson Heights from another section of Queens. I asked him how he liked it, and he said he liked it just fine, except that every once in a while he felt like a stranger there. "Everyone's nice," he said. "But there's hardly anyone like me."

Telling you where the employees of Sunshine Market are from will sound like the beginning of one of those jokes about an airplane, some parachutes, a priest, a rabbi, and a minister. The day shift of cashiers: Nohora is from Colombia, Marta is from Guatemala, Ruthie is from Venezuela, Ashima is from India, Rose Mary is from Bolivia. In the grocery department: José Aguilar is from El Salvador, and Neptali Chavez, who handles the dairy and frozen foods, is from Ecuador. Josie Andaya, the bookkeeper, has an Indian father and a Chinese mother, and grew up in the Philippines. Many of the high-school kids who work at the store in the afternoon are first-generation mixtures of the sort that results when a variety of new immigrants from all over the world end up in the same New York neighborhood: half Greek and half Bolivian; half French and half Ecuadoran; half Irish and half Romanian. The produce guys (Jerry Goldberg and Bruce Mitchnick), the grocery manager (Bruce Reed), the butchers (Richard Schindler, Bill Getty, and Alfonce Spicciatie), Toney, and Herb were born and raised in America.

Many of the people who work at Sunshine live near the store, in Queens or Brooklyn. The immigrants among them all moved to this country expecting to spend their time with Americans, and they have ended up spending most of their time with other people who came here from somewhere else expecting to hang around with Americans. Many of them have described the ethnic makeup of Sunshine's employees as "all mixed up." They use this description when discussing Sunshine's customers, too. "Some of the shoppers are American," Ashima once said. "The rest of them are all mixed up."

Working together, the employees of Sunshine Market have learned a lot about people from other lands. "Indians are very emotional," Rose Mary Cervantes, the head cashier, once told me. "It's their culture." Angel Ruiz, the former assistant manager, whose family is Puerto Rican, is married to a former cashier who is Argentine. "They're very wild people, Argentines," he once said to me. "They love to eat. They'll eat anything. Meat. Meat stuffed with eggs. Meat stuffed with pizza. They'll even eat *rocks*. When I'm at my in-laws', I check on the cats once in a while, just to make sure no one in the kitchen got carried away." Toney is often mistaken for Spanish. "I'm not Spanish at all," he says. "One thing about Spanish people, they're crazy about meat. I'm not." Richard, a high-school student of Romanian heritage who bags groceries in the afternoon, says, "The biggest thieves in the store are the Russians." One day, I noticed that Marta, the Guatemalan cashier, had been crying, and I mentioned it to José, who said, "Guatemalans are like that. They're always crying all the time." Herb says, "We have assembled an extremely varied group of people here, and we work together well. We're like a family. We have our ups and downs like a family, but we really are close-knit, the way a family is."

Angel's nickname for Toney was Sleeping Beauty, because he sometimes takes naps on his breaks. His nickname for José was Eagle Eye, because José's last name, Aguilar, means "eagle" in Spanish. Angel called Jim McCague, a regular customer, Mr. OTB. Mr. McCague recently bet on a horse named Call Me Angel in Angel's honor; the horse and Mr. McCague both lost. Angel called Richard, the afternoon bagger, Lover Boy, because he's always hitting on the cashiers; among the afternoon cashiers are girls he called Hot Lips, Bambi, Sweet Pea, and Grouchy. It was Angel who came up with the name Peruvian Army for the group of shy, mild men who pack out the groceries twice a week. The soldiers of the Peruvian Army talk very little, and then only among themselves, so I never had any idea of what they thought about the market, or the neighborhood, or living in America. To me they seemed self-contained and somewhat detached from the modern world, but someone told me that they call Bruce the grocery manager Cabezón, which is Spanish for "big head," because he has a large forehead, and Bruce the produce man Spuds, after the dog in the beer commercial, and they call Jerry Goldberg, the produce manager, Oscar, after Oscar from Sesame Street.



MOST of the time, Frank Sinatra provides the soundtrack for the life and times of Sunshine Market. This is because Herb is a huge fan. One of the privileges of being an independent retail food merchant is that if you want to play "My Kind of Town" rather loudly several times a day in your store—well, it's your business. "Strangers in the Night" is also your business. Also "Saturday Night (Is the Loneliest Night of the Week)" and, for that matter, Frank's entire Capitol catalogue, plus his recordings for Columbia and Reprise. Several years ago, the cashiers submitted a petition to Herb requesting equal time for rock music. "It was very nicely written," Herb says. "I thanked them for it, and then pointed out that there was a Key Food around the corner that was accepting applications."

A few weeks ago, Marta the cashier turned her radio at home to an unfamiliar station and half listened to it for about an hour, humming along, without giving any thought to what it was. Then she realized. "It was Frank, from the store!" she said. "I couldn't believe! I didn't know him in Guatemala, but I knew him from the store. I used to hate him, but now it was—I don't know, O.K."

One day, Rose Mary Cervantes was up in Herb's office, and I saw her looking at some of his Sinatra tapes. The expression on her face was partly one of distaste and partly one of semi-scientific curiosity. She caught me looking at her and quickly put the tapes down and then said, "Really, I'm not *crazy* about Frank, but I'm getting used to him. If I had my pick, I'd pick soft rock or maybe the sixties, but really what I'd pick would be Julio Iglesias, because when I hear him"—she began fluttering her hands and rolling her eyes back—"my heart starts beating and it fills me up. Oh, yes, Julio. Ju-lee-oh."

Actually, Herb does have a few Julio tapes, and I pointed this out. "Yeah," Rose Mary said gloomily, "but just Julio's English ones."

ONE Tuesday, which happened to be the day of the store's tenth birthday party, the first truck to arrive was Pepperidge Farm. It was delivering four bunches of yellow and blue balloons, to decorate the cash registers (yellow and blue are the official colors of Sunshine Market); a half-dozen yellow and blue carnation corsages, for the cashiers; and Rose Mary, whose boyfriend, the Pepperidge Farm man, was giving her a lift so she could get all the birthday supplies to the store.

Rose Mary has worked at Sunshine Market since the store opened. Once in a while, she takes a vacation, but for most of the past seven years she has worked every single day, seven days a week. Last year, she didn't take any vacation at all, because she forgot to make any plans. There are times when she looks as if she wished she had remembered. Before taking off her coat on the birthday, she began lashing the bunches of balloons to the cash registers. She stopped for a moment to ring up a grapefruit, a jar of honey, and a half carton of eggs for a skinny man with a mustache who had followed her in the front door. Someone practicing to be a psychic might enjoy working as a supermarket cashier. Ring up people's orders and you develop quite a hunch about their next meal. This one gave a premonition of breakfast. It was not yet eight, but everyone in the neighborhood knows that if you want to get your shopping in a little early no one at Sunshine is going to hold you to the clock.

Ashima arrived a few minutes later, carrying a big sheet cake, frosted in blue and yellow, with white letters saying "HAPPY TENTH ANNIVERSARY SUNSHINE MARKET."

Robert Felder arrived next. He is the utility infielder at the market: he bags, he crushes boxes, he tidies up. Usually, he loves to clown around. Today, he was in an uncharacteristic bad mood, because the previous night a transit cop had issued him a summons for playing his radio too loud on the subway. Hanging up his coat, he told Rose Mary the story, and said, "It *couldn't* have been too loud. I was sleeping while it was playing."

The butchers came in next, and went straight to the back of the store and started cutting up meat.

Then Toney came. Ordinarily, Tuesday is his only day off, but he decided to come in so he'd be on hand for the party. Immediately behind him was the Arnold's Bread guy. As Toney was taking off his coat, he said, "Hey, it's Mr. Arnold's! It's the pushiest guy in the business. You want to stick around for the birthday party?"

The Arnold's guy elbowed his way past him, pushing a hand truck stacked with loaves, and said, "Toney, don't mess with me today. I'm unbelievably late. Give me my money and let me get out of here."

At a few minutes before eight, Frank Sinatra was singing about Chicago, Herb was in the office reviewing orders, Jerry and Bruce were out front checking the day's produce delivery, José was counting cases of groceries, and Neptali was price-labelling egg cartons that had come in from Lancaster County, Pennsylvania. Neptali, who is known as Nick, because no one at the store can pronounce his name, is the store's best labeller. He has smooth, slender, long-fingered hands and a loose wrist. He grew up in Ecuador, and though he worked in a food store there, nothing he did foretold his labelling facility. In Ecuador, prices were handwritten. Moving to America, he got a job at Key Food at the suggestion of a friend, and there he met up with a label gun. He got so good at labelling that the Key Food managers consulted him when they were buying new guns. He fired a round of price stickers onto the egg cartons. The pile of cartons was as high and wide as a chicken coop. Another customer who had slipped in early, an elegant old man, stepped up to him, motioned with his cane, and said, "Do you have any eggs for me, my friend?"

The first customer when the store officially opened was a bald man in a green T-shirt. He disappeared down one of the aisles, then reëmerged at the cash register with a box of Entenmann's chocolate-covered doughnuts, two tubs of Philadelphia Cream Cheese, and a head of iceberg lettuce. At the last moment, he backed out of the line and jettisoned the lettuce in the Pepsi display at the head of Aisle 5. An elderly

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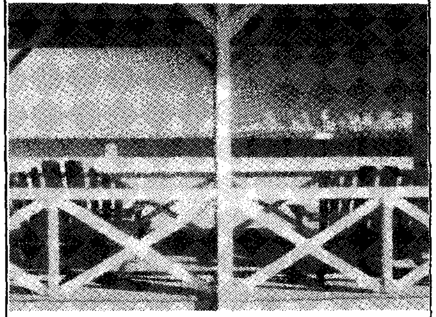

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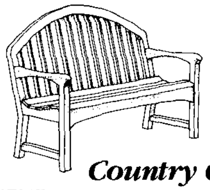

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man in a tweed blazer came up behind him, picked up the lettuce, carried it over to Toney, and said, "Is it possible for a person to get a tender piece of meat around here?" As he spoke, he was gesturing with the lettuce. A moment later, he turned, took a few steps, put the lettuce down, and headed toward the dairy case. The lettuce was now in the Frookie All Natural cookies display. An Asian woman was passing the Frookie display. In her shopping cart were a box of Birds Eye Frozen Mixed Vegetables and two pumpernickel bagels she had just fished out of the roll bin. She picked up the lettuce, put it in her cart, and headed for the cashiers.

The cashiers had pinned on their corsages. A woman with a sleek silver pageboy walked over to Ashima's line, looked at her corsage, and said, "Who's getting married?"

Ashima said, "It's the birthday of the store. No one's getting married."

The woman said, "Rose Mary? Is Rose Mary getting married?"

Rose Mary was one checkout line over, ringing up the groceries of three Indians—mother, daughter, and granddaughter. The mother had a caste mark on her forehead and was wearing a turquoise sari shot through with gold threads. Her daughter was in black slacks and a red turtleneck. The little girl was in a plaid jumpsuit. There are seventeen sari stores in Jackson Heights. There are a dozen Indian grocery stores, where you can buy red and green lentils, garam masala, and puri mix. These women were buying Eggo Homestyle waffles, frozen corn on the cob, a loaf of Italian bread, and two containers of La Yogurt, strawberry flavored. Rose Mary said, "I'm not getting married. My boyfriend isn't part of this. That's not why we have the flowers."

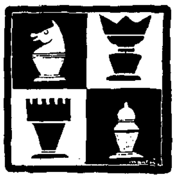
The woman with the pageboy said, "Rose Mary, if your boyfriend won't help out, then get *rid* of him."

A heavyset man entered the line behind her. He was wearing a gingham shirt and a baseball cap that said "HBO" on the crown. In one hand he was holding some Internal Revenue Service forms. Wrapped around his other wrist was a cinnamon-colored Chihuahua. Rose Mary said, "Hi, Eddie. Hi, Pancho."

Pancho trembled. Eddie patted him on the head with one finger and said, "Hey, what's with the flowers?"

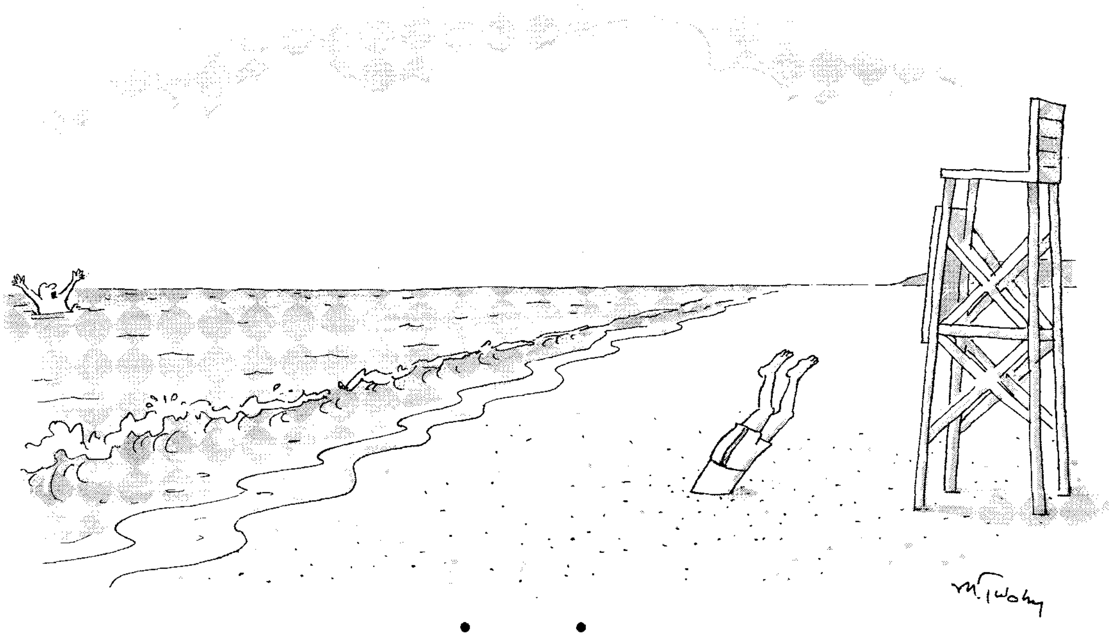
The lines at the cash registers began to build. A freckle-faced teen-age boy wearing an "Orlando Magic" hat: a bag of Doritos, a box of Strawberry Pop-Tarts, a can of Spam, a box of Kraft Macaroni & Cheese, a gallon of milk, a box of Teddy Grahams. A glamorous blonde, wearing gold mules: a Sara Lee cheesecake, four packages of veal. A man and woman speaking Russian: a box of Shredded Wheat 'N Bran, a box of Grape-Nuts, a box of Honey Bunches of Oats. A woman in a pink cape: a pound of Hershey's Kisses and a steak. A youngish man wearing a Yankees cap: one hero roll, two six-packs of Meister Bräu. An ample-looking middle-aged woman in purple stretch pants and spike heels: a package of Ore-Ida frozen French fries, a bunch of bananas, a one-pound package of Oscar Mayer wieners. A rotund, rosy-faced old man: a frozen piecrust, two packages of Brussels sprouts, a can of Campbell's Chicken Broth, and a pound of butter.

It was impossible for me to watch this cavalcade of products and not either picture them being eaten together or try to imagine the circumstances that led this particular person to need this particular, random-looking assortment of things at this particular moment. A good cashier, on the other hand, appears to notice nothing. Ashima, who everyone concedes is the best cashier, likes to chatter while she's ringing up orders; this makes her seem both totally focussed and completely distracted, as if she were putting on mascara while driving sixty miles an hour. A skinny man with a crewcut, his glasses held together over his nose with electrical tape, unloaded three cans of Budweiser, a can of Krasdale apricots, a ham steak, a can of Blue Diamond walnuts, two kaiser rolls, and a box of Haviland chocolates from his shopping cart. "My son is at Pennsylvania State, in pre-med," Ashima said, punching in the prices. "He's a very good boy. I don't know how I got so good at this. To me, it's easy. Everyone loves me, because I am the best."



The party was supposed to start at ten, then at eleven, then at twelve. Then people started taking their breaks. At one, word filtered down from the office that Herb had a dentist appointment and had to leave immediately.

Finally, at two o'clock, Robert said he was going to eat the cake if someone else didn't start it, so a skeleton crew was left at their posts and everyone else came up to Herb's office.



Upstairs, Rose Mary pulled the cake out of the box and said, "I think we should cut the cake, and leave a piece for Herb to have tomorrow, and take a picture, and that's it, because it's too busy out there." Sometime long ago, Rose Mary had ascended to the role of den mother here. There were eight people clustered in the corner of the office: Ashima, Marta, Rose Mary, Jerry, Robert, Toney, and Richard and Bill, who had taken a break from carving a side of beef. Someone was drinking a Coke. I took the picture, and then Robert had me take another, so that the Coke bottle would be turned the right way in the picture—with the label pointed toward the camera, so you could read it clearly.

MY favorite thing at Sunshine was a small sign in the back of the produce department which said:

Mellow, Versatile
Bananas
For a different treat,
fry or bake and serve hot

Some supermarkets post recipes above certain products, or have their aisles choked with dump displays, or have music playing at subliminal levels to encourage acquisitive urges. Sunshine, by comparison, is an aloof selling environment. Herb likes a clean-looking store and Frank Sinatra, who has no track record as a sales tool. Toney hates having the aisles cluttered. One of Sunshine's few concessions to conventional sales psychology was the banana sign. Many people left the store with a bunch of bananas. Either the sign worked or it was a case of restating the obvious. People seem to love bananas, and also green bananas and plantains, which were added to Sunshine's produce department a few years ago, when the neighborhood was reconfigured ethnically. Also calabaza, fresh yautia, red batata, and coconuts. Also yucca, which are laid out like big costume jewelry on green liner paper, beside the avocados and the honeydews and the navel oranges and the Granny Smiths.

Long ago, Jerry Goldberg, the produce manager at Sunshine, ran a greenmarket on Allerton Avenue in the Bronx. Eventually, he got tired of standing outside in the cold. He has worked indoors at Sunshine for ten years, but he always looks dressed for Allerton Avenue. Jerry is in charge of ordering and displaying and tending to the produce. It is not a desk job. Mornings, he starts by prepping the vegetables to put on display. He has huge hands, with fingers as gnarled as parsnips. It is quite a sight to wander back to his worktable and catch him hacking at the lettuce heads, cutting the ugly leaves off and tossing them away. A few heads into it, he's ankle deep in greenery. One day when I was hanging around with him, he had a dozen cases of heads to sculpt. "Look at these," he said, motioning to the cases. "Half of them, the outer leaves, all get thrown away." A husky man in a blue jumpsuit came up to the worktable and said, "Yo, Jerry, I've got something with your name on it." Jerry kicked his way through the lettuce leaves, and the two men walked past the dairy case to the produce section.

The man in the jumpsuit was Michael Singleton, and he was delivering from Loi Banana/Global Tropicals, of Brooklyn. Most of the produce at Sunshine Market, and at most supermarkets in New York, comes from Hunts Point Market, in the Bronx, where the wholesalers gather every morning before dawn. Loi Banana/Global Tropicals brings citrus, specialty items, and a few things that Jerry doesn't find to his liking at Hunts Point. Michael had deposited thirty cases of fruits in the aisle beside the produce section—Ruby Red grapefruits, Don Antonio's Delight Quality Cantaloupes, Seald Sweet Oranges, Qual-A-Key Limes, and Bonita's Pride Tomatoes. One stack was strictly bananas and tropicals. Michael handed Jerry an order form. Jerry wiped his hands on his pants and took the papers. He had lettuce leaves on his shoes, strawberry stains on his jeans, and something green on the front of his shirt. When he read the order form, he groaned, and said, "Twenty-three dollars for apples?"

"That's what it says."

"Twenty-three? You got no heart."

"I don't make the rules. I just collect the money."

Bruce Mitchnick, the assistant produce manager, was walking past, advising a woman on how to peel a beet. Toney was following behind him, checking the seal on a bottle of Deer Park water for a nervous woman who wanted him to assure her it was safe. Bruce Mitchnick is small and solid, and sometimes wears a weight lifter's leather belt while he works, which when he is hoisting a melon or a case of tomatoes gives him the aspect of a gladiator confronting vegetables. For twelve years, Bruce owned a produce market in Kew Gardens. He started in the business as a kid growing up in Brooklyn. He loves fruits and vegetables. He is a fountain of produce lore. Once he told me, "Don't wash anything before you eat it. That's where all the vitamins are. If you wash the produce, you wash the vitamins away." Another time, he said, "People are afraid of broccoli rabe, but I know for a fact it's delicious."

Jerry was saying, "Hey, Mike, what I need from you is five platanos, ten bananas, one calabaza, three avocados, one wax yucca, one coconut, two apples, and three oranges." He meant cases.

Michael pointed at the stacks and said, "Right here."

Bruce stopped his beet discourse and said, "Jerry, take a look at these gorgeous strawberries."

Jerry said, "I can't look at strawberries. I'm too heartsick about these apples for twenty-three."

The woman with Bruce grabbed his elbow and said, "Don't leave me now. I've got the beets out of the water, and so now what?"

One unwritten law in supermarkets is that whatever is just being unloaded and is not yet marked and not ready to sell is exactly the thing that people want. Being boxed and waiting to be unpacked makes all products irresistibly attractive to shoppers. Within seconds, four or five people were circling the stack that Michael had deposited. A woman with glittering eyeglasses got hold of half a banana sticking out of the top of the crate. Jerry shooed her away. A moment later, a pear-shaped man in a peacoat grabbed it. It did not budge.

Michael said, "Jerry, sign off for me, because I got to get back to Brooklyn."

The pear-shaped man let go of the banana, looked at Jerry, and said, "I have to tell you, I have a problem with this."

Jerry said, "Mister, there are plenty of bananas out. There are bananas out you can get to."

The man said, "No, I don't want any bananas. I was just thinking to myself, Why doesn't he ever play any Al Jolson here? Sinatra I hear plenty, but I don't think there's as much Jolson as I'd like, and I'm here every day."

Jerry signed the produce order form, and Michael wiggled his hand truck out from under the boxes and rolled it away.

A WEATHER map of Sunshine Market would show considerable variety. In the big walk-in dairy refrigerator, which is called the dairy box, the temperature is thirty-eight degrees. In the produce box, it is about forty and slightly damp. In the frozen box, in the basement, where the frozen food is stored, it is below zero and breezy. In the meat box, it is thirty-seven degrees. In the cutting room, where the butchers and wrappers work, it is exactly the temperature you would like it to be if you were going to a college football game in the Midwest and were wearing a sweater, corduroy pants, a muffler, mittens, and a hat. To the meat crew it feels absolutely normal. In fact, most of them can no longer stand ordinary room temperature; within a few minutes, they break into a sweat.

The butchers at Sunshine Market are Bill Getty, Richard Schindler, and Alfonce Spicciatie. Mariana Rivera is the meat wrapper. Bill, Alfonce, and Mariana started working at the store the day it opened; Richard joined them a few months later. The four of them have been working cheek by jowl in the cutting room, which measures twenty feet by forty, for a decade—a fact that, when I pointed it out to them, evoked this response from Richard: "I guess that's true. Hey, whaddya know?" Lack of sentimentality may actually be an advantage when you're spending eight hours a day around carcasses. Once, Bill, who is the meat manager, was telling me what I thought was going to be a sweet story about a little old lady who approached him one Thanksgiving for advice on cooking her bird. His summation: "I said to her, 'Hey, lady, you're seventy-two bleeping years old. I'm *sure* this isn't your first turkey.' "

The beef at Sunshine Market is from Iowa. The chicken is from Maryland. The pork, according to Bill, is from wherever you can find a dead pig. Richard is from Ozone Park, Queens. Alfonce is from Brooklyn. Bill is from Astoria. Mariana is from Ecuador. All of them came to their positions by the ordinary route—that is, they learned meat-cutting right out of high school, because it was a good, solid trade—except for Mariana, who had been a housewife and a mother until one day when she was out shopping and someone at her butcher shop offered her a job. Mariana is trim, and has a high-fashion rooster-style haircut and a taste for snug jeans and tiny, fragile-looking spiky-heeled shoes. At work, she is always dressed as if she could be ready to go to a disco at a moment's notice. She told me once about how she got started: "When the butcher said this to me about a job, I said, 'What, me work?' He said, 'Yes, you.' I said, 'Me? You're kidding.' It was really just an accident." It was a pretty major accident: she has now been a meat wrapper for nineteen years. "I didn't want any job. It was all just an accident," she said again. As she was talking, she was flipping a plastic foam platter of gooey pink veal cutlets onto the wrapping machine, pulling plastic wrap around it, and then pressing the package onto a flat plate at the front of the machine, which melts the wrap shut. The plate was the warmest thing in the room. She flipped another foam package onto the warm plate and said, "Then I joined the union, and now I'm in it for good."

The meat people spend most of their time in the cutting room, which is in the left rear corner of the store. On occasion, they will step out to take care of some meat-related or personal concern, and when they do they rarely bother to take off their cutting coats, which are calf-length white smocks that snap up the front and are splattered and smeared with blood. Bill attended the store's anniversary party in his bloodied coat. He is a big, tall man with considerable presence. In every snapshot taken at the party, Bill and his bloody coat loom. In some of the pictures, it almost looks as if a homicidal maniac had dropped in for cake and ice cream.

The meat people are separated from the rest of the market by their body temperatures, by their union (Amalgamated Meat Cutters), and by a swinging door leading into the cutting room. The door has a small oblong window. The butchers can look out on the market as they work, but the window's shape and size and glassiness make the store look as if it were a show on television. Describing what they see going on in the store, the butchers sound as if they were discussing a sitcom. One day, they watched a shoplifter load five pounds of shrimp into a plastic bag and then vanish. "In my life, I never saw a person pick through shrimp in a more meticulous way," Richard says. The next day, the man came back four or five times, neatly palming packages of boneless shell steak on each visit. The butchers marvelled at his switch from surf to turf. Then they passed along their observations to Angel, who chased the guy out and lost him on the avenue, but found the shell steak stockpiled in the dumpster behind the store. The shrimp were never recovered.

ONE Thursday morning, Stephen C. Costa, who is the district sales manager of the Best Foods Baking Group, which is a unit of Best Foods, which is a wholly owned subsidiary of CPC International, which is a multinational grocery-products corporation, had a new chocolate-chip toaster cake he wanted to bring to Herb Spitzer's attention. Thursday morning is salesmen's time at Sunshine Market. It used to be almost a ritual: on Thursday, the salesmen would stack up outside Herb's office door, shuffling brochures and presentation folders praising New Liquid Tide, or Cycle Lite dog food with real chicken, or Redpack canned tomatoes, and he would usher each man in and sit through the pitch. When Herb was younger, he got a kick out of Thursday mornings, but ever since he turned sixty he has had a greedy feeling about time. More often than not these days, Herb has Toney tell the salesmen to send their material in and he will call them back if he's interested. "I could spend my life up here with the salesmen, if I let them," he says. "And who needs it?"

Stephen Costa, therefore, had got lucky, and he knew it. He is youngish, curly-haired, bespectacled, beefy, and on the shy side when it comes to salesmanship. His district is Queens, and he oversees fourteen delivery routes. All told, each week he peddles forty-five thousand pounds of Thomas' products—including Thomas' English muffins and Toast 'R Cakes, and Sahara pita breads. Forty-five thousand pounds sounds like a lot of dough to me, but Stephen Costa would like to sell more.

Herb tapped his pencil on a pad of paper and said, "O.K., tell me about it. You're a pretty good guy, I've heard."

Costa said, "You can discount the chocolate-chip toaster cakes if you want." He swung his chair around. Shoulder to shoulder, he and Herb faced the little window that affords a view of the whole store. The lines at the register were three deep. Someone had just broken a ketchup bottle in Aisle 4.

"We'll go regular price. Next."

"Next, uh," Costa said, stumbling. "O.K., next, uh, the following week we have Toast 'R Cakes on sale. The regular retail is one twenty-nine."

Herb said, "Fine. We'll come out at ninety-nine, and we'll do an ad in our circular. Arrange for your route man to get it. Next?"

"We have a two-week window on Sahara pita breads again. White and wheat. We'd like it in the circular also."

"We're a small little operation here," Herb said. "We can't do a circular every single time. Is that it? You don't have much ammunition for your presentation here, do you?"

"I'm kind of new. Let's see, I do want to talk to you about another English muffin. The Thomas' twin-pack."

"What can you do for me?"

"Twenty cents off, plus another dime if you do a coupon. I'm not able to offer much more. I'm the new kid on the block."

"I'd like to go at one ninety-nine, but if your price is one ninety-seven and a half I'll have to go at two-oh-nine. At the lower price, you can have a dump display and move a lot of product."

The intercom rang, and while Herb was answering it Costa flipped through his papers for another muffin to flog. The call was from Toney, telling Herb that another sales representative was downstairs and eager to meet with him. "Tell him he'd be wasting his time," Herb said into the phone.

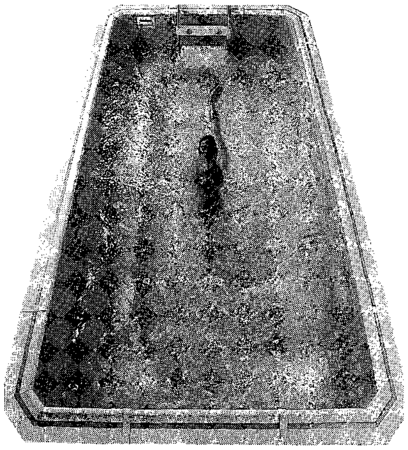
There was a knock on the door, and someone called out, "Herb, it's Ronnie from Pepsi. Key Food is going ninety-nine on litres."

"Then so will I. Have your guy mark them."

He didn't bother opening the door. The transaction was completed through drywall.

Costa signed his paperwork on the muffins and stood up to leave. Herb glanced at him and said, "Nice job."

Herb's office is a narrow second-floor wedge in the back of the store, above the trash compactor and the dairy and produce boxes. The wall separating it from the trash compactor isn't totally sealed, so the loud growl and crunch of the compactor is as audible as if it were in the office. The compactor runs, on and off, all day long. Conversations in the office that begin in a normal speaking tone often



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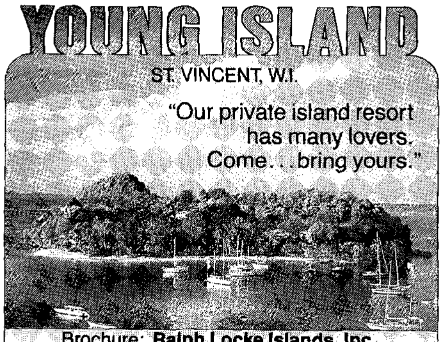

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shift into a shout at some point. "Nice job" was a shout.

As Costa was going down the stairs, a man named Don Vitale was coming up. Don Vitale is the Mazola man. He is also the Skippy man and the Hellmann's man. He and Costa don't know each other, but, as it happens, both of them work for CPC International, which owns Mazola as well as Thomas'. Vitale is a strapping fellow, and he was wearing a loose raincoat. He and his coat seemed to take up most of the office. The coat was brushing along the top of the desk. His head was brushing the ceiling. Taking his files out of his briefcase, he knocked a chair backward.

As he picked up the chair, he said, "Herb, we've got a Mazola promotion to the Hispanic market. We've got these ballot boxes, and you put them with an aisle display, and we're giving away bicycles and twenty-five-dollar grocery coupons and whatever. It's a tie-in with the Spanish television show that Mazola helps sponsor, called 'Sábado Gigante.' "

"This thing was dreadful last time you did it," Herb said, and he began riffling through papers on his desk.

Vitale said, "The show is a huge hit, Herb. The girls on the show are models, or whatever, and they're incredibly popular. They're cute girls." He paused and looked at Herb for a reaction. Herb had turned slightly away from him and was scanning some paperwork on his desk. He once told me that he was now quite inured to being pitched, even by someone of Vitale's gusto. "At this point, I know exactly what I want for the store," Herb had explained to me. "Someone else isn't likely to present me with something I haven't already decided I want. I've been in this business long enough that I know my style."

Vitale tried again, adding, "Herb, the girls are appearing at some of the stores in combination with the promotion."

"I used to do this sort of thing more often," Herb said, mostly to himself. "We used to give away samples of new products and so forth. Maybe we should start it again, although I'm inclined to think that good service matters to people more than this sort of hoopla."

Vitale said, "Herb, this has been a major success in other places. The girls were just in a store on Roosevelt, and it was a mob scene."

Without looking up, Herb said, "That's why you'll never see them here."

AT the end of the day, you close down a supermarket by first putting the more tender vegetables in the cooler and the money in the safe. At Sunshine Market, at the end of every day, the afternoon cashiers—mostly high-school girls from Jackson Heights who are saving for college or for a solid start in life—go around the store and collect the abandoned things and put them back where they are supposed to be. Then they go up and down each aisle and tidy up all the merchandise. Bruce Reed told me that in grocery language this is known as levelling the shelves or touching the shelves. If you take the time to do this, then every morning, when the store opens, it looks fresh and full and ready for business, brimming with everything anyone might need, instead of looking like a place where hundreds of people had been racing through all day, pulling things off the shelves and carrying them away faster than they could be replaced.

One Sunday I spent at the store had been a big shopping day, so the shelves were particularly empty and somewhat disordered. There was a Reynolds Wrap and a four-pack of Charmin in the magazine rack, some Scooter-Pies in the Ding Dongs, a Cadbury chocolate bar on top of the Schaefer Beer display, a five-pound bag of Heckers All Purpose Flour on the Maxwell House shelf, a can of Carnation Leche Evaporada with the Sanka, and a can of Krasdale Fancy Small Whole Beets in with the Calimyrna figs. A basket with Downy fabric softener, two cucumbers, a head of lettuce, and a roll of ScotTowels was abandoned on the Pepsi display: maybe someone had left his wallet in his other pair of pants. A box of Duncan Hines Devil's Food Cake Mix, a half pint of whipping cream, and a package of Joseph Woo's slivered almonds abandoned in the canned tomatoes: maybe the sudden onset of a diet, or the decision to hold off baking for a cooler day. It took the girls a good half hour just to round up the stray groceries. I watched them put those things back where they belonged and then start touching each shelf in each aisle. By the time I headed out the door that night, they had just begun touching Aisle 3. —SUSAN ORLEAN

# MUSICAL EVENTS

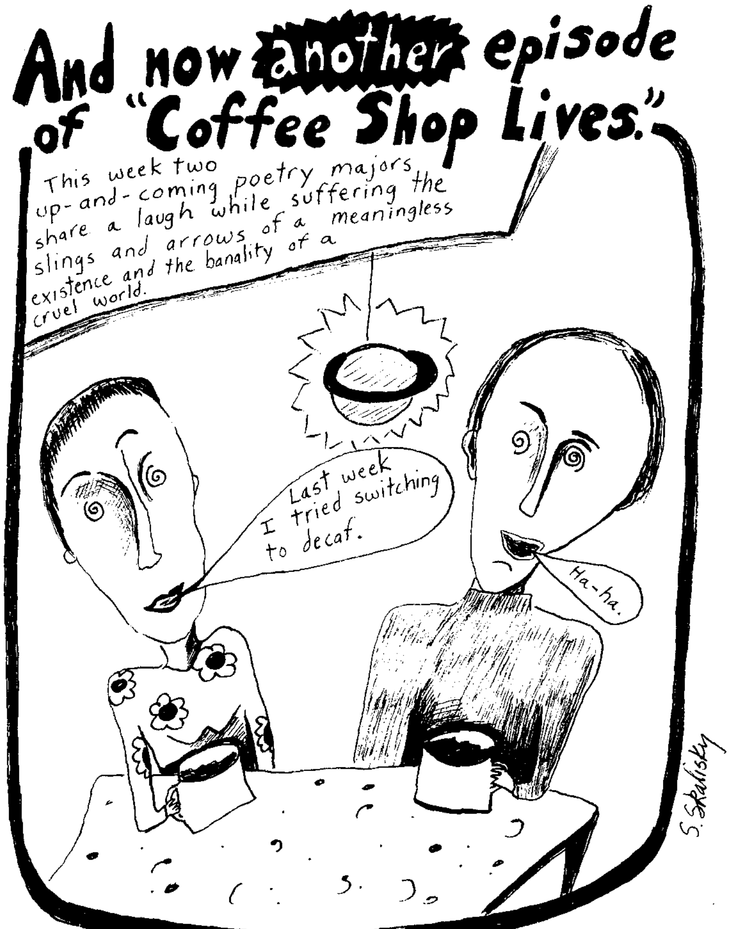
## *Diverse Dramas*

THE grand-opera season ended in April, but in concert halls, small theatres, and churches there has been a diversity of musical dramas to enjoy: oratorio, cantata, chamber music with theatrical components, near-operas, operas; works from the seventeenth, eighteenth, and twentieth centuries. Purcell's "Fairy-Queen," first performed in 1692, was intended as a spectacular show for a company of musicians, actors, and dancers; in Shakespeare's "Midsummer Night's Dream" big masques were inserted. Today, only festivals (or conservatories with strong music, dance, and drama divisions) can muster the forces. At the 1989 Aix-en-Provence Festival, Les Arts Florissants, the Peter Hall Theatre Company, and the Compagnie Ris et Danceries came together to present the work. (The Arts Florissants contribution yielded a fine Harmonia Mundi recording.) Last month, Les Arts Florissants brought a pocket edition to the platform of Alice Tully Hall. There were seven singers, eleven instrumentalists, and one actress—Harriet Walter, who took the title role. A lively narrative, written by Jeremy Sams, and delivered by Miss Walter with Joyce Grenfell brio, recounted the action and evoked the scenes. The singers and players—French, American, and British—were technically adept and unaffectedly communicative. Inspired by William Christie, who directed at harpsichord and organ, they compassed the full Purcellian range: clowning, passions rustic and courtly, clarion jubilation, hushed enchantment. Véronique Gens in the famous Plaint was especially moving. This was not the full thing, not even a full account of the score—there were cuts, and Purcell needs more than a quartet of strings—but was in its own right a marvellous account of music that is varied, vital, and exquisitely beautiful.

VIVALDI'S "La Senna Festeggiante" is a full-length cantata in uninhibited praise of Louis XV. (The text of the last aria is "Never before has one found enthroned Piety more majestic or Majesty more noble; it was not to be found on the Capitoline Hill, nor in the Grecian Empire; nor will its equal ever be seen again.") The circumstances of the first performance are unknown: maybe the cantata was written for the arrival in Venice of a new French legation, in 1724; maybe, since the performing instructions are unusually precise, Vivaldi sent his score to France to celebrate the birth of the Dauphin, in 1729. There are three characters: the Golden Age (a soprano) and Virtue (a mezzo) come to the banks of the Seine (a bass) and take up abode there beneath the glorious beams of the Sun of Gaul. Beyond that, there is no action, yet I have seen "La Senna Festeggiante" staged—at an Aix festival, in a series of decorative tableaux. The American première was a concert performance given in Tully Hall last month by the Little Orchestra Society. Dino Anagnost conducted. Theatrical touches were provided by a bright banner of St. Mark overhead and the presence of Lynn Redgrave, who recited prologues and metalogues written by Craig Timberlake. ("Metalogue" is a word invented by Auden in his "Magic Flute" translation, to describe Sarastro's between-the-acts speech to the audience: "A form acceptable to us, although Unclassed by *Aristotle* or *Boileau*.")

Vivaldi probably intended the concerted numbers marked *coro* to be sung by the soloists. Here they were sung by an ensemble from the Metropolitan Singers/The Greek Choral Society. The soloists—Pamela Myers, Susan Shafer, and Ara Berberian—lacked fleetness of division; they had big modern voices. But they sang with spirit. By Arts Florissants standards—attained by long, intimate rehearsals and frequent performances—this performance was somewhat workaday, yet Vivaldi is so inventive, attractive, and thorough a composer that one heard it with pleasure and admiration. His range is far greater than anyone knowing only the flood of concertos could guess. The concert was a midpoint landmark of the Society's five-year festival Vivaldi's Venice.

DARIUS MILHAUD'S centenary falls in September. He taught at Mills from 1940 to 1971. He was an important presence in American music. Almost a quarter of his numerous compositions (they reached Opus 443) were first performed in this country; seventy of them were commissioned by American individuals or organizations. (I learn this from


And now another episode of "Coffee Shop Lives."
This week two up-and-coming poetry majors share a laugh while suffering the slings and arrows of a meaningless existence and the banality of a cruel world.
Last week I tried switching to decaf.
Ha-ha.
S. Skalisky

Next week: A creamer is passed, and a new love begins!

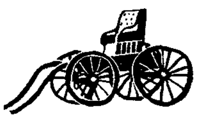
Jane Galante's preface to her translation of Paul Collaer's Milhaud monograph, published by the San Francisco Press.) The New York Philharmonic, which under Mengelberg, Rodzinski, Mitropoulos used to play a fair amount of Milhaud, and which commissioned his Ouverture Philharmonique for the inaugural season in Philharmonic Hall, has billed not even a "Création du Monde" next season, but the operatic Milhaud is being remembered. Brooklyn College has announced an October production of "Christophe Colomb," a work of such scenic and dramatic ambition, with its twenty-seven scenes, that few companies have tackled it. Milhaud's operas ranged in length from eight minutes ("La Délivrance de Thésée") to nearly three hours ("David"). "Le Pauvre Matelot," a *complainte* in three acts, lasts about half an hour; the Opéra-Comique played it in 1927 as a curtain-raiser to "Tosca" or "Werther," and then, in 1938, on a bill with the stage première of Milhaud's *opéra-bouffe* "Esther de Carpentras" (which lasts about an hour) and a ballet to the Suite Provençale. Roger Désormière conducted. The "Matelot" and "Esther," works of the mid-twenties, were composed for standard orchestra, but Milhaud later rescored the "Matelot" for thirteen instruments (four woodwinds, three brasses, percussion, and string quintet), and in this form it has become his opera most often heard. It needs only four singers. Bernard Desgraupes has now rescored "Esther" for the same ensemble plus a second viola. In the chamber-orchestra versions, the two operas ("Esther" an American première) were played last month by L'Opéra Français de New York, in Florence Gould Hall.

Cocteau's libretto for the "Matelot" is a cool, neat rendering of what is almost a folktale: a woman murders a visitor for his wealth so that she can give it to her beloved sailor husband, expected back after many years' absence; in the visitor she has failed to recognize him. Milhaud's setting has the objective tone of a ballad. Sea chanteys, real and invented, are treated in his wrong-note, polytonal way; a shocking verismo anecdote—the wife commits the murder with a hammer—is related in melodious flow; and as a result the piece is curiously disturbing. "Esther" is very different in character and draws on the composer's Jewish and Provençal roots. A blithe young Cardinal-Bishop, the Pope's nephew, has been banished to Carpentras because of an indiscretion with a Jewish girl. The Jews of the town seek his permission to present their annual Purim play, "Esther"; granting it, he thinks of a way to regain favor with his uncle. He breaks in on the performance, assumes the role of Ahasuerus, and offers the company a choice between baptism and banishment. But the beautiful young actress playing Esther persuades him to change his mind. The score is a kaleidoscope that includes a Provençal carol, Jewish chant, a C-major fugue, a powerful 7/4 choral prayer to Queen Esther, cabaret song, opéra-comique *couplets*, Provençal mirth in the manner of Bizet's "Arlésienne," an Alleluia.

Milhaud once said to Collaer:

> When I am in the country at night, plunged in silence, and I look at the sky, it seems to me that from every point in the firmament, and even from the center of the earth, rays and impulses come toward me; each of these impulses carries a different thread of music, and all the infinity of musical lines cross and intersect each other without ever losing their individual clarity and distinctness. It is an incredible feeling. I have always tried to express this emotion, this sensation of a thousand simultaneous lines of music launched toward me.

To be sure, he said that while strolling through the streets of Aix on a summer evening "laden with the sound of bells and the scent of freshly picked fruit"; and Aix in summer, as visitors to even the modern, motorway-hemmed city know, is an enchanted place, ripe with romance. Milhaud's music at its best justifies the romantic account of its origins. When it becomes dry, casual, nonchalant, one may wish that he had been less promiscuously receptive to all those ideas pouring in. He was copious, fluent, bewilderingly uneven, seldom dull.



Yves Abel, that gifted young Canadian conductor, brought to Milhaud the expressive flexibility and patrician flair that have been admired in his Gluck, Grétry, and Bizet. This time, he had not persuaded all his players, each with a solo part, to listen attentively to the singers and never obscure them; the exuberant wind writing easily becomes obstreperous. Max Charruyer's staging and John Michael Deegan and Sarah Conly's sets were simple and effective. Capable casts included Judy Berry (the Wife), Helena Berenbau (the Esther), Charles Workman (the Cardinal), Marcel Quillévéré (the Sailor, and Haman in the Purim play), Jonathan Green (the Cardinal's valet), David Maze (the Neighbor in the "Matelot"), and Robert Sapolsky (Cacan, who directs the play and has the last words, "La mascarade s'achève en sermon").

FRANK MARTIN's "Le Vin Herbé," termed an *oratorio profane*, is in effect a modern madrigal opera: a "Tristan" for a choir of twelve, seven strings, and piano. The piece has sometimes been staged; a few years ago the New York Lyric Opera put on a production in St. John the Divine, directed by Nicholas Deutsch and conducted by Christopher Keene. Last month, I Cantori di New York, conducted by Mark Shapiro, gave a concert performance in St. Peter's Church (beneath Citicorp) with two soloists—the Iseult and the Tristan—and a chorus of twenty-four, from which the other characters stepped forth. Martin drew his libretto from Joseph Bédier's "Roman de Tristan et Iseut" (1900), which was based on medieval poems that Wagner knew. The score—the first act was performed in 1940, the whole in 1942—freely acknowledges "Tristan und Isolde" with rising sixths, chromatic falls, and other motifs inescapable after Wagner, but its tone is chaste, narrative, restrained. At a performance of "Tristan und Isolde," listeners share the lovers' high passions—blood surging, pulses throbbing, senses reeling. At "Le Vin Herbé," they remain sympathetic observers, stirred by the lovers' plight as Martin and his singers tell of it in music of eloquence, clarity, and beauty.

Mr. Shapiro had the measure of the work and led it surely, even if at times he flailed at his small forces as if they were a chorus and orchestra of thousands. Steven Tharp was an ideal Tristan—strong, free, and forward in tone, verbally sure, lyrical in utterance. Gianna Corbisiero, the Iseult, was steady and shining at the top of her range, weaker below. Mary Lynne Nielsen, the Brangaine, sang well (Martin takes Brangaine to a top C), and there were other pleasing solos. The program book—spacious pages of large, agreeable type printed on good paper—put to shame the slithery, advertisement-laden little pamphlets of the Lincoln Center houses. It included essays by the conductor and by Miss Nielsen, and, attractively laid out, a libretto with a parallel-column translation.

Conrad Cummings' "Photo-Op," billed as "a new opera on contemporary political 'discourse,'" was played last month and this at La MaMa by the Ridge Theatre company and the Cummings Ensemble. The piece lasts about fifty minutes, but the libretto, by James Siena, would fit onto a page. The 1988 Presidential campaign provided the inspiration. Two candidates, played by a soprano and a baritone, deliver their capsule statements, over and over again. Repetitions, phase shifts displacing the verbal stresses, harmonic switches, truncations, juxtapositions reveal hidden thoughts—or a lack of serious thought—behind such stuff as

> By keeping things exactly the way
>    that they are
> we'll find truth in the smallest things
> that are just as good as the big ones
>    that keep
> this country great.

While the blamelessly diatonic melodies recall Virgil Thomson, the structures enlist and adapt minimalist procedures for satirical ends. Instrumental interludes—a tough, driving toccata, a voluntary of hideous sweetness—divide the speeches. The production, by Bob McGrath, seemed somewhat inflated: a two-singer, four-player cabaret was decked with twenty-three busy extras (political consultants, anchorpersons, a Senate committee, eleven Secret Service men stationed through the theatre); a décor, by Laurie Olinder, that encompassed the house, turning it into a convention hall; and a continuous film commentary, by Bill Morrison, on a large screen behind the stage. But the execution was musically and theatrically expert. The candidates were Margaret Bishop and Larry Adams, the instrumentalists Gregory Fulkerson (violin), Daryl Goldberg (cello), Andrew Sterman (various woodwinds), and the composer (electronic keyboard).

John Eaton's latest dramatic composition, a "Peer Gynt" for instrumental sextet, was given this month at the Kitchen by the New York New Music Ensemble. Peer is enacted by a clarinet (B-flat clarinet in youth, bass clarinet when he ages), Anitra by a violin, Ingrid by a cello, Peer's troll wife by a piano. A flutist has four roles: Solveig, Aase (alto flute), the Boyg (bass flute), and Peer's troll son (piccolo). A percussionist is the stag of Peer's opening narrative, and in the score he is also the Button Molder. (In the performance, the role was taken by the conductor.) The piece is "a collection of ten theatrical fragments based on some essential actions chosen freely from the play by Ibsen." They include the opening scene, with Peer and Aase; the wedding party, abduction, seduction, and desertion of Ingrid; In the Hall of the Mountain King; the encounter with the Boyg; the building of Peer's cottage, the arrival of the troll wife with her son, and the parting from Solveig; the Death of Aase; Peer and the monkeys; Peer as prophet, with Anitra's Dance; and the encounters with the Button Molder condensed into a single scene.

A few lines are sung or spoken, and otherwise the dialogue is instrumental. In the final scene, for example, Peer cries "Where is my self?" and in reply Solveig sings "In my faith, in my hope, and in my love"; then Peer's "My mother—my wife! Oh, purest of women" is represented by a phrase from the clarinet, and Solveig's lullaby by a tender flute motif, while a mysterious purring from a Tibetan prayer bowl rubbed by the Button Molder represents his "Peer, we shall meet at the last crossroads." Music makes simultaneities of what in the spoken drama is sequential.

Eaton has the born opera composer's command of precisely communicative melodic gesture and a wonderful ear for new, telling sounds. In this work he makes instruments "speak"; the occasional words seem to rise naturally out of —to be an integral part of—their lines. The players must also act. As Stockhausen's Little Harlequin, Jean Kopperud has shown her ability to play the clarinet while dancing, prancing, pirouetting; as Peer she went even further, at one moment turning a somersault without missing a note. She was a merry, vivacious, and touching virtuoso. Jayn Rosenfeld (flute), Linda Quan (violin), Michael Finckel (cello), James Winn (piano), and James Baker (percussion) were virtuosos, too. Richard Duncan conducted; Mike Phillips directed. Since the ensemble—the "Pierrot Lunaire" quintet plus percussion—is a regular one of our day, "Peer Gynt" may well become a repertory piece. I look forward to hearing it again; the fifty-minute drama is bold, high-spirited, and moving.

—Andrew Porter

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# BOOKS

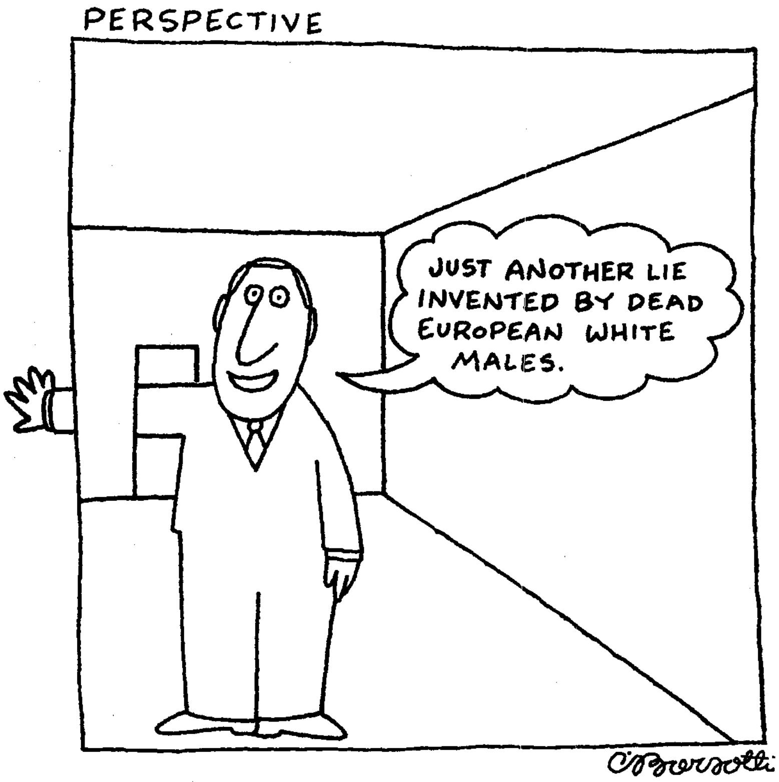
## *The Buccaneer*

TO Evelyn Waugh, who "never had any esteem for him," one of the most revealing things about Winston Churchill was the way in which he surrounded himself with a gang of "crook associates," all of whom, coincidentally, had names that "began with B." There was Lord Birkenhead, a self-made lawyer and self-confessed adventurer, endowed with unrivalled powers of repartee and vituperation, who became Lord Chancellor at the end of the First World War, but who spent much of the nineteen-twenties drinking himself to death. There was Lord Beaverbrook, an unscrupulous Canadian businessman, who settled in Britain, established himself as a newspaper tycoon and incorrigible mischief-maker, and became a piratical Minister of Aircraft Production in 1940. There was Brendan Bracken, a pushy, headstrong, and mysterious Irishman, who was—falsely—rumored to be Churchill's illegitimate son, and who served as his Minister of Information for much of the Second World War. There was Bernard Baruch, a Wall Street speculator and Washington wire-puller, whose business ethics were decidedly suspect, and who was far from being the public-spirited paragon that he liked to pretend he was. And there was Robert Boothby.

Among this highly questionable quintet, Boothby certainly held his own in terms of unsavory behavior. Until late middle age, his finances were chaotically precarious. He gambled too much and drank too much, and his private life was by turns reckless, foolish, comic, and tragic. His marriage to Diana Cavendish, in 1935, ended two years later—at a time when divorce in England still spelled social disgrace. His lengthy affair with Lady Dorothy Macmillan, wife of the Conservative Prime Minister, led to widespread disapproval in the upper echelons of the Tory Party. His failure to declare his financial involvement in what were called "Czech assets" caused him to be censured by a House of Commons Select Committee in January, 1941, and that meant he was obliged to resign from the government. And in the early nineteen-sixties the *Sunday Mirror* alleged—inaccurately—that he was a homosexual, and that he had close contacts with the London underworld. Throughout his life, Boothby never cared what other people thought of him, and since what they thought was almost invariably disapproving, it is easy to see why.

But, while Boothby could compete on equal terms with Churchill's other swashbuckling "B" friends when it came to misdemeanors and misdoings, he was no match for them in political influence or public achievement. He was born in 1900, and, after Eton and Oxford, was elected Conservative M.P. for East Aberdeenshire at the precocious age of twenty-four. This was a brilliant dawn to his political career, and he was soon spoken of as "the coming man." In 1926, when Churchill, who was then Chancellor of the Exchequer, appointed Boothby his Parliamentary Private Secretary, his prospects were further improved. But during his mentor's eclipse in the nineteen-thirties no preferment came Boothby's way, and even in 1940, as Churchill stormed and speechified his way to immortality, Boothby wielded power only briefly, as Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Food. After resigning over the "Czech assets" affair, he returned to the back benches, and never held government office again. Instead, he made a new career for himself as a journalist and television personality, and in 1958 he was given one of the first life peerages. He settled down to a useful but marginal retirement in the House of Lords, occasionally enlivened by adverse publicity and acrimonious exchanges with old friends and new enemies, which lasted until his death, in 1986.

Thus described, Boothby seems little more than a colorful and controversial footnote to the political history of twentieth-century Britain—a poor man's Charles James Fox, whose private life ruined his public prospects, and who infuriated his times when he should have been influencing them. Yet here is Robert Rhodes James, himself a former Conservative M.P., and the author of important studies of important figures such as Lord Rosebery, Sir Anthony Eden, and Winston Churchill, lavishing nearly five hundred pages of affectionate and appreciative prose, in "Robert Boothby: A Portrait of Churchill's Ally" (Viking; $22.95), on a man damningly dismissed by his London *Times* obituarist as a "political maverick of unfulfilled promise." Why has Rhodes James bothered? In part because he was chosen to do so by Boothby himself, and, as a result, has enjoyed unrestricted access to his papers. In


PERSPECTIVE
JUST ANOTHER LIE INVENTED BY DEAD EUROPEAN WHITE MALES.
CBarsotti

part because he has set out to establish the truth about a figure who was so often in his day a victim of gossip, rumor, and innuendo. And in part because in so doing he sheds new light on two of the most important and complex men in twentieth-century British politics: Winston Churchill and Harold Macmillan.

THE Boothby who emerges from these pages is certainly a much more substantial and more appealing figure than his censorious critics allowed. He was good-looking and good-humored, possessed a most attractive speaking voice, and was a witty, fluent, and compelling orator, a marvellous raconteur, and a superb letter writer. He was a hardworking constituency M.P., who stalwartly defended the farmers and fishermen of East Aberdeenshire. He was extremely well travelled and well read for a politician, and served for a time as chairman of the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra. He was an accomplished performer on radio and television, and the two programs with which he was most closely associated, "Any Questions?" and "In the News," became national institutions. And his range of friendships was unusually wide: David Lloyd George, Stanley Baldwin, Oswald Mosley, John Strachey, Harold Nicolson, Duff Cooper, Michael Foot, and Richard Crossman among politicians; Somerset Maugham, Thomas Beecham, Compton Mackenzie, and Noël Coward from the worlds of the arts and entertainment; and Lord David Cecil, John Maynard Keynes, Maurice Bowra, Lewis Namier, and Isaiah Berlin from the groves of academe. Moreover, as Lord Salter once pointed out, on all the great public issues of the day Boothby had "been uniformly right." He persistently opposed the deflationary policies so rigidly and so heartlessly pursued by a succession of interwar governments. He warned Oswald Mosley against resigning from the Labour Party in 1930, and begged him not to exchange the politics of Parliament for the politics of the streets. He was one of the first M.P.s to discern the menace posed by Hitler, consistently campaigned for British rearmament, and vehemently opposed the Munich settlement. He played an essential part in the parliamentary drama and backstage intrigue that brought down Neville Chamberlain, in May, 1940, and installed Winston Churchill in power in his stead. He was an early and influential campaigner for reform of the law that made homosexual practices a criminal offense. He opposed the dishonest and disastrous policy espoused by Sir Anthony Eden at the time of the Suez crisis. He was a trenchant critic in the House of Lords of the economic policies pursued by the Heath, Wilson, and Thatcher governments, and he never ceased to urge Britain's closer integration with Europe.

This was an honorable and distinguished record; indeed, it was altogether too honorable and too distinguished to bring Boothby the political recognition he deserved. Over the economy, over Hitler, over Europe, and over Suez, he found himself at odds with his own party leadership every time. To have differed from them occasionally and deferentially, and then to have acknowledged the error of his ways, would have done him no harm. But Boothby differed frequently and vociferously, and never doubted that events would prove him right, as they invariably did. This was not the way for a backbencher to get to the top in politics, or for a Scotsman to win the plaudits of the English. As Rhodes James explains, Boothby never really liked and never really understood the English. He was too clever, too independent, too flamboyant for his own good. Unlike most politicians—especially successful ones—he would not dissemble, he hated cant and humbug, and he spoke his mind forcefully and freely. To put it another way, he was never a safe or reliable party man. He was a Tory, but had more friends on the Labour benches than on his own, and when he entered the House of Lords he sat as an independent peer rather than as a Conservative.

Given the subject, the material, and the record, Rhodes James has no difficulty in presenting Boothby as a warm and winning figure. But he also makes it plain why so many people in high places persisted in regarding him as unsound, unreliable, and untrustworthy. Although publicly brave, he was often privately weak. His judgment about other people was good but about himself was notoriously bad. He made a great mistake in not taking up a proper career at the bar: dabbling and gambling in the City was wholly in-

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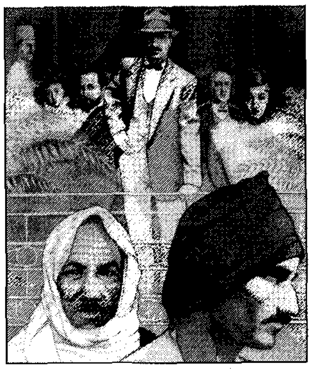

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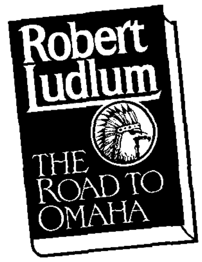

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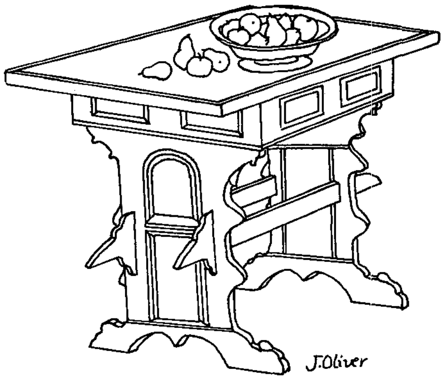
appropriate for a man who knew and cared so little about money, and it did his reputation and his career irreparable damage. He was fatally attracted (and attractive) to women: falling in love too often, getting engaged too often, and fathering several illegitimate children. The causes he championed may have been admirable, but his advocacy often did them harm, because his own reputation was so suspect, and because he could not be bothered to do anything about it. And there was also in his temperament something so stubborn, so cross-grained, and so counter-suggestible that he invariably quarrelled with those in authority—especially those within his own party. Much of this quality emerges in Rhodes James's vivid account of Boothby's tempestuous relationship with Winston Churchill.

Boothby knew Churchill for forty years, but his friendship with him was more complex, poignant, uncertain, and revealing than the subtitle of this book implies. Churchill appointed Boothby to be his Parliamentary Private Secretary in 1926 because he rightly saw in him a young man of spirit and promise. But Boothby soon turned out to be altogether too spirited: he disapproved of many of the Chancellor's deflationary economic policies, did not see eye to eye with him over Soviet Russia, and on several occasions offered his resignation, only to have it rejected each time. During the early nineteen-thirties, when Churchill conducted his ill-advised and ill-starred campaign against what eventually became the Government of India Act, which granted a very limited measure of self-government, Boothby refused to join him in his crusade, and their relations, though still cordial, were no longer close. The fight against appeasement brought them together again, but Churchill's intemperate behavior at the time of King Edward VIII's abdication so enraged Boothby that he wrote Churchill a scathing letter, denouncing him for his inconsiderateness and his lack of balance, and thereafter the two men were always wary of each other. But this awkwardness did not prevent Boothby from supporting Churchill for the premiership in 1940, and Churchill, in turn, rewarded Boothby with a junior office at the Ministry of Food—a better appointment than it sounded, since the Minister, Lord Woolton, was in the House of Lords, and Boothby thus had sole responsibility for handling departmental business in the House of Commons.

It was a great opportunity. Boothby clearly enjoyed his brief spell in office, and Woolton came to admire his energy and his skill in handling the Commons. He brought flair and panache to an intrinsically dull subject and was full of bright ideas, and his talks on the radio and his visits to the provinces were notably successful. But although Churchill recognized the need for such a department, he soon "developed an unreasonable dislike" of a ministry concerned with controlling the intake of food, and several times vented his spleen on Boothby. Boothby staunchly but tactlessly replied in kind. To make matters worse, he did not hide his disappointment in Churchill for keeping so many of the appeasers in his coalition government (especially Neville Chamberlain and Lord Halifax); he failed to understand how weak the Prime Minister's political position was at that time, or how great were the burdens that he bore. Even more unwisely, Boothby campaigned to bring Lloyd George into the government—a terrible error of judgment, since Lloyd George was loathed by the Tory Party, and was noticeably defeatist over Germany. And Boothby compounded this folly by sending Churchill a wild letter—even Rhodes James describes it as "insane"—presuming to tell him how to set about winning the war. The Prime Minister was understandably incensed by such behavior, and Boothby was stingingly rebuked: "If he did not mind his own business, he would perhaps have no business to mind."

It was in this already overstrained atmosphere that the scandal concerning "Czech assets" erupted. In 1939, Boothby became chairman of a committee whose purpose was to lobby the British government to meet the claims of those British citizens and Czechs resident in Britain who held assets in Czechoslovakia that had been frozen in the aftermath of the German occupation. Boothby's motives were entirely honorable and altruistic: he liked the Czechs, he wanted justice for them, and he would accept no payment for his services. But one Czech businessman with a very large claim was Richard Weininger, a personal friend of Boothby's. At this time, Boothby was heavily in debt, and Weininger offered to help him out by paying him a percentage of his own claim when, or if, it was met. Indirectly, therefore, Boothby acquired a personal stake in the resolution of the very claims he was seeking to persuade the British government to settle; and, despite friendly warnings, he failed to see the potential political danger of his position. In the autumn of 1940, Weininger was interned as an alien under the infamous Regulation 18B, and when his papers were examined, the relationship with Boothby was discovered. Since Boothby had failed to declare his own financial interest in Czech assets, either to Parliament or to the Prime Minister, it seemed as though he had been guilty of conduct unbecoming to an M.P.



In October, 1940, Churchill insisted that a Select Committee of the House of Commons examine the matter, and—unfairly, in Rhodes James's view—it censured Boothby for improper behavior. Early in the following year, Boothby was compelled to resign his ministerial office, though not his parliamentary seat. Churchill had clearly been embarrassed by the whole affair: he did not send Boothby a private message of support or friendship, and Boothby never forgave him for what he regarded as a betrayal. In Churchill's defense, it must be remembered that he was a titanically busy man at this time; that his power base in the Conservative Party was still very weak; and that he could not afford to have his government tainted by even a hint of scandal. Nonetheless, Boothby suspected that Churchill had had enough of him, was determined to break him and callously "throw him to the wolves." (This was probably an exaggeration.)

Boothby, for his part, had certainly behaved foolishly, but not dishonorably. The trouble was that in the light of his generally suspect reputation it was easy to believe the worst of him, and most people did. The "Czech assets" scandal blighted his political career, and as he brooded on the matter in later life he became convinced that Churchill had indeed been to blame.

In the postwar years, their relations were never warm. In the late forties, they both actively supported the European movement, and they spent time together in Strasbourg. But Churchill offered Boothby no job when he returned to power in 1951, though he did give him a knighthood two years later, in the Coronation Honours. In the Commons, Churchill once referred dismissively to Boothby as "The Member for Television," and Boothby was on one occasion thoughtless enough to walk out of the chamber in the middle of one of the Prime Minister's less successful speeches. As Churchill declined in his retirement into sad and lonely old age, Boothby was one of the few people who continued to visit him. But, despite his lingering admiration for Churchill's wartime leadership, he had never been able to give Churchill the total devotion and unquestioning admiration he demanded, and in 1978 Boothby caused a storm by asserting in his memoirs, "Recollections of a Rebel," that there was in Churchill's nature an "element of cruelty." In the ensuing controversy, Boothby more than held his own: he had drawn attention to the ruthless, authoritarian, egotistical side of Churchill's nature, which his admirers were (and are) inclined to ignore or disbelieve, but which undeniably existed. As Boothby, in turn, succumbed to the ravages of old age, he became increasingly boring and bitter on the subject. But his final verdict, though harsh, is not without a modicum of truth: "Winston was a shit; but we needed a shit to beat Hitler."

BOOTHBY's relationship with Harold Macmillan was of an entirely different kind. They were both men of Scottish blood who entered Parliament during the nineteen-twenties and soon found themselves at odds with the Conservative leadership—initially over the economy (both admired the writings of John Maynard Keynes), and subsequently over Germany (on which Macmillan's record

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was as honorable as Boothby's). They became political allies and personal friends; but they were very dissimilar characters. Macmillan at that time was an exceptionally unattractive man—poorly dressed, with ugly teeth and an untidy mustache—and he was also widely regarded as being pompous, boring, more than a touch eccentric, and without serious political prospects. Boothby, by contrast, was captivating and debonair, and seemed to have the social and political world at his feet. In 1929, the affair began between Boothby and Macmillan's wife, born Lady Dorothy Cavendish, a daughter of the Duke of Devonshire, and it lasted until 1966, when Dorothy died. Especially in the early years, Boothby and Dorothy were irresponsibly indiscreet, and the affair was widely talked about in London society; it never got into the newspapers, though, for the press was less prurient and more reticent in those days than it is now. But to many people in the know this liaison merely confirmed the opinion they had already formed—that Boothby was "an unspeakable cad," who had now added to his previous delinquencies by seducing the wife of a parliamentary colleague.

The reality, Rhodes James insists, was very different: the initiative in this affair came not from Boothby but from Dorothy. Bored with a husband who seemed unable to satisfy her, she sought excitement and escape, and Boothby provided both in abundance. It was at her instigation, not his, that they became lovers, and Boothby may have been the father of the daughter, Sarah, whom Dorothy bore in 1930. Even Macmillan was obliged to admit that the pair were deeply in love, but he adamantly refused to give Dorothy a divorce, so that she might be free to marry Boothby. The resulting situation was both unhappy and hopeless—especially for Boothby, who, unlike Harold and Dorothy, had no settled home and no family. He tried to escape, and to reëstablish his own life on his own terms: hence his short-lived marriage to Diana Cavendish, Dorothy's cousin; hence many other affairs and abortive engagements. But Dorothy would not let him go—even pursuing him across Europe on one occasion when he threatened to find his freedom and his future with someone else. Once in her clutches, he never succeeded in breaking free, and in later life he described Dorothy as "the most selfish and most possessive woman" he had ever known. Far from being the bounder who had stolen a colleague's wife, Boothby thus appears to have been more the victim of the affair than the villain.

Whatever the exact nature of this triangle, its political consequences were undeniable and important. Lonely and humiliated, Macmillan turned to politics for consolation and fulfillment, and soon began to display reserves of toughness, ambition, and ruthlessness which few had discerned in him before. But, while this affair was the making of Macmillan as a politician, it was the ruination of Boothby. To the ignorant, the disapproving, and the envious, it only provided further proof of his incorrigible moral degeneracy. By sleeping with one Cavendish and divorcing another, he incurred the abiding enmity of one of the most powerful aristocratic families in Britain. To make matters worse, in 1923, Dorothy's sister, Rachel, had married the Honourable James Stuart, Churchill's wartime Chief Whip and a Tory Party grandee throughout the nineteen-fifties, who detested Boothby and may well have worked to thwart his political career. Above all, Rhodes James believes, the protracted involvement with Dorothy did Boothby serious personal damage, by sapping his will and eroding his self-confidence. Even more than the scandal over "Czech assets," it worked to destroy his political career.

One of the greatest ironies of this story is that relations between Boothby and Macmillan remained relatively cordial. Boothby was generous in making financial provision for the child he may have fathered by Dorothy; and soon after Macmillan became Prime Minister he made Boothby a life peer—not, as some alleged, because he relished the black humor of ennobling his wife's longtime lover with this upstart honor but, rather, because Boothby's health was poor (he had recently suffered a heart attack), because Dorothy urged this course of action on her husband, and because he was genuinely eager to comply. "It is curious but true," Macmillan wrote to Boothby on that occasion, "that I think we have always agreed in politics." Thereafter, they continued to correspond, and met each other regularly. When Dorothy died, suddenly and unexpectedly, of a heart attack, both men were devastated. Boothby took to the bottle with characteristic determination, and was rescued only by his second, and very happy, marriage—to Wanda Senna, in 1967. Macmillan destroyed Boothby's letters to Doroth[illegible] unread; Boothby burned her letters to him. Thus ended one of the most extraordinary emotional entanglements in British political history, the full details of which will never be known, and the like of which could not happen again, given the intrusive media of today.

For many readers, and certainly for many historians, the accounts of Boothby's relations with Churchill and Macmillan will be the most important and fascinating things in this book, and they certainly give it a wider significance than at first glance it might seem to possess. But Boothby was able to enjoy—and endure—such extraordinary relations with Churchill and Macmillan only because he was himself such a resilient and remarkable figure. And it is that figure, by turns weak and wise, foolish and fearless, infuriating and irresistible, that Robert Rhodes James brings vividly and sympathetically alive. That Boothby was no paragon Boothby himself was always the first to admit. That he was more serious, more sensitive, and more sombre than his buccaneering image implied seems equally certain. Boothby's ultimate tragedy was that he could not resolve the contradictions of his own nature. Perhaps it was, as he himself suspected, because of some fundamental character flaw: an inner sense of emptiness, futility, and despair. Or perhaps, as Evelyn Waugh had suggested, it had something to do with the fact that his name began with "[illegible]"

—DAVID CANNADINE

●

Cheered by their words and with an altogether more positive attitude to boxing, I climbed the steps of the gym, quite in awe of these calm yet potentially explosive men. And I found myself recalling the words of Marlon Brando in *On The Waterfront*, "I could have been a bartender."—*Alex Hendy and Akwi Seo in Look Japan, an English-language magazine in Tokyo.*

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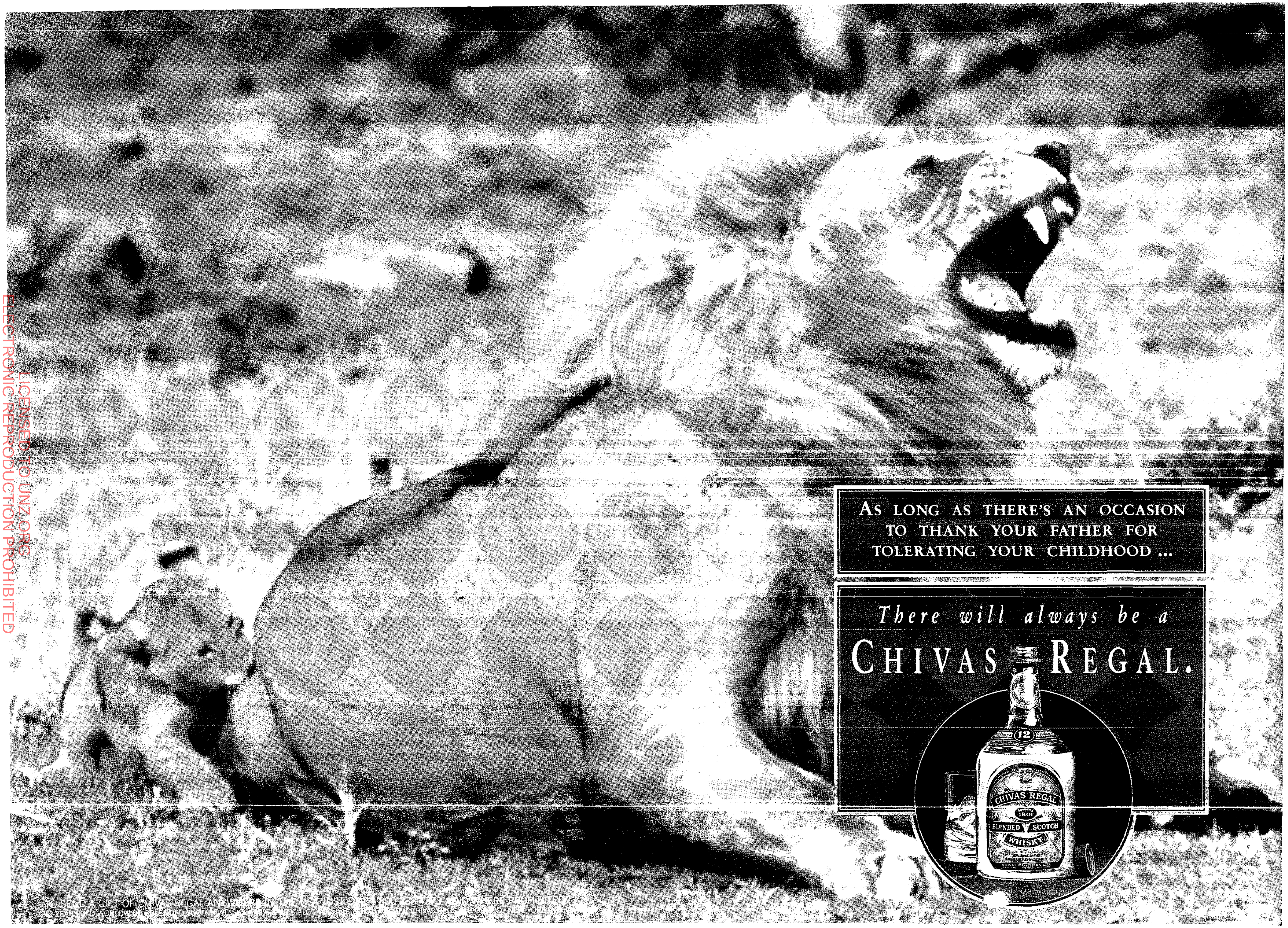

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